This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

3 3433 06728769 2

429 (1)

James Lenox.

THE

WORKS

OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDMUND BURKE.

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. VIII.

London:

PRINTED FOR F. C. AND J. RIVINGTON,
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD;
SOLD ALSO BY J. HATCHARD, PICCADILLY.

1815.

LENOX LIBRARY
NEW YORK

Printed by R. and R. Gilbert, St. John's Square, London.

CONTENTS.

VOL. VIII.

A Letter from the Right Honourable Edmund Burke, to a Noble Lord, on the Attacks made upon him and his Pension, in the House of Lords, by the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale - - Page 1

Three Letters addressed to a Member of the present Parliament, on the Proposals for Peace with the Regicide Directory of France.

LETTER I. *On the Overtures of Peace* - 77

LETTER II. *On the Genius and Character of the French Revolution as it regards other Nations* - - - - - - - 211

LETTER III. *On the Rupture of the Negociation; the Terms of Peace proposed; and the Resources of the Country for the Continuance of the War* - - - - - - 265

A

LETTER

FROM THE

RIGHT HON. EDMUND BURKE,

TO

A NOBLE LORD,

ON THE

ATTACKS MADE UPON HIM AND HIS PENSION,
IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS,

BY

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD

AND THE

EARL OF LAUDERDALE,

Early in the present Sessions of Parliament.

1796.

A

LETTER,

&c.

MY LORD,

I COULD hardly flatter myself with the hope, that so very early in the season I should have to acknowledge obligations to the duke of Bedford and to the earl of Lauderdale. These noble persons have lost no time in conferring upon me, that sort of honour, which it is alone within their competence, and which it is certainly most congenial to their nature and their manners to bestow.

To be ill spoken of, in whatever language they speak, by the zealots of the new sect in philosophy and politicks, of which these noble persons think so charitably, and of which others think so justly, to me, is no matter of uneasiness or surprise. To have incurred the displeasure of the duke of Orleans or the duke of Bedford, to fall under the censure of citizen Brissot or of his friend the earl of Lauderdale, I ought to consider as proofs, not the least satisfactory, that I have produced some part of the effect I proposed by my endeavours. I have laboured hard to earn, what

the noble Lords are generous enough to pay. Personal offence I have given them none. The part they take against me is from zeal to the cause. It is well! It is perfectly well! I have to do homage to their justice. I have to thank the Bedfords and the Lauderdales for having so faithfully and so fully acquitted towards me whatever arrear of debt was left undischarged by the Priestleys and the Paines.

Some, perhaps, may think them executors in their own wrong: I at least have nothing to complain of. They have gone beyond the demands of justice. They have been (a little perhaps beyond their intention) favourable to me. They have been the means of bringing out, by their invectives, the handsome things which lord Grenville has had the goodness and condescension to say in my behalf. Retired as I am from the world, and from all its affairs and all its pleasures, I confess it does kindle, in my nearly extinguished feelings, a very vivid satisfaction to be so attacked and so commended. It is soothing to my wounded mind, to be commended by an able, vigorous, and well informed statesman, and at the very moment when he stands forth with a manliness and resolution, worthy of himself and of his cause, for the preservation of the person and government of our sovereign, and therein for the security of the laws, the liberties, the morals, and the lives of his people.

people. To be in any fair way connected with such things, is indeed a distinction. No philosophy can make me above it: no melancholy can depress me so low, as to make me wholly insensible to such an honour.

Why will they not let me remain in obscurity and inaction? Are they apprehensive, that if an atom of me remains, the sect has something to fear? Must I be annihilated, lest, like old *John Zisca*'s, my skin might me made into a drum, to animate Europe to eternal battle, against a tyranny that threatens to overwhelm all Europe, and all the human race?

My lord, it is a subject of awful meditation. Before this of France, the annals of all time have not furnished an instance of a *complete* revolution. That revolution seems to have extended even to the constitution of the mind of man. It has this of wonderful in it, that it resembles what lord Verulam says of the operations of nature: It was perfect, not only in its elements and principles, but in all its members and its organs from the very beginning. The moral scheme of France furnishes the only pattern ever known, which they who admire will *instantly* resemble. It is indeed an inexhaustible repertory of one kind of examples. In my wretched condition, though hardly to be classed with the living, I am not safe from them. They have tygers to fall upon animated strength. They have

have hyenas to prey upon carcasses. The national menagerie is collected by the first physiologists of the time; and it is defective in no description of savage nature. They pursue, even such as me, into the obscurest retreats, and haul them before their revolutionary tribunals. Neither sex, nor age—nor the sanctuary of the tomb, is sacred to them. They have so determined a hatred to all privileged orders, that they deny even to the departed, the sad immunities of the grave. They are not wholly without an object. Their turpitude purveys to their malice; and they unplumb the dead for bullets to assassinate the living. If all revolutionists were not proof against all caution, I should recommend it to their consideration, that no persons were ever known in history, either sacred or profane, to vex the sepulchre, and by their sorceries, to call up the prophetick dead, with any other event, than the prediction of their own disastrous fate.—" Leave me, oh leave me to repose!"

In one thing I can excuse the duke of Bedford for his attack upon me and my mortuary pension. He cannot readily comprehend the transaction he condemns. What I have obtained was the fruit of no bargain; the production of no intrigue; the result of no compromise; the effect of no solicitation. The first suggestion of it never came from me, mediately or immediately, to his majesty or any

any of his ministers. It was long known that the instant my engagements would permit it, and before the heaviest of all calamities had for ever condemned me to obscurity and sorrow, I had resolved on a total retreat. I had executed that design. I was entirely out of the way of serving or of hurting any statesman, or any party, when the ministers so generously and so nobly carried into effect the spontaneous bounty of the crown. Both descriptions have acted as became them. When I could no longer serve them, the ministers have considered my situation. When I could no longer hurt them, the revolutionists have trampled on my infirmity. My gratitude, I trust, is equal to the manner in which the benefit was conferred. It came to me indeed, at a time of life, and in a state of mind and body, in which no circumstance of fortune could afford me any real pleasure. But this was no fault in the royal donor, or in his ministers, who were pleased, in acknowledging the merits of an invalid servant of the publick, to assuage the sorrows of a desolate old man.

It would ill become me to boast of any thing. It would as ill become me, thus called upon, to depreciate the value of a long life, spent with unexampled toil in the service of my country. Since the total body of my services, on account of the industry which was shewn in them, and the fairness of my intentions, have obtained the acceptance

of

of my sovereign, it would be absurd in me to range myself on the side of the duke of Bedford and the corresponding society, or, as far as in me lies, to permit a dispute on the rate at which the authority appointed by *our* constitution to estimate such things, has been pleased to set them.

Loose libels ought to be passed by in silence and contempt. By me they have been so always. I knew that as long as I remained in publick, I should live down the calumnies of malice, and the judgments of ignorance. If I happened to be now and then in the wrong, as who is not, like all other men, I must bear the consequence of my faults and my mistakes. The libels of the present day, are just of the same stuff as the libels of the past. But they derive an importance from the rank of the persons they come from, and the gravity of the place where they were uttered. In some way or other I ought to take some notice of them. To assert myself thus traduced is not vanity or arrogance. It is a demand of justice; it is a demonstration of gratitude. If I am unworthy, the ministers are worse than prodigal. On that hypothesis, I perfectly agree with the duke of Bedford.

For whatever I have been (I am now no more) I put myself on my country. I ought to be allowed a reasonable freedom, because I stand upon my deliverance; and no culprit ought to plead in irons.

Even

Even in the utmost latitude of defensive liberty, I wish to preserve all possible decorum. Whatever it may be in the eyes of these noble persons themselves, to me, their situation calls for the most profound respect. If I should happen to trespass a little, which I trust I shall not, let it always be supposed, that a confusion of characters may produce mistakes; that in the masquerades of the grand carnival of our age, whimsical adventures happen; odd things are said and pass off. If I should fail a single point in the high respect I owe to those illustrious persons, I cannot be supposed to mean the duke of Bedford and the earl of Lauderdale of the house of peers, but the duke of Bedford and the earl of Lauderdale of palace-yard; —The dukes and earls of Brentford. There they are on the pavement; there they seem to come nearer to my humble level; and, virtually at least, to have waved their high privilege.

Making this protestation, I refuse all revolutionary tribunals, where men have been put to death for no other reason, than that they had obtained favours from the crown. I claim, not the letter, but the spirit of the old English law, that is, to be tried by my peers. I decline his grace's jurisdiction as a judge. I challenge the duke of Bedford as a juror to pass upon the value of my services. Whatever his natural parts may be, I cannot recognize in his few and idle years, the competence

competence to judge of my long and laborious life. If I can help it, he shall not be on the inquest of my *quantum meruit*. Poor rich man! He can hardly know any thing of publick industry in its exertions, or can estimate its compensations when its work is done. I have no doubt of his grace's readiness in all the calculations of vulgar arithmetick; but I shrewdly suspect, that he is little studied in the theory of moral proportions; and has never learned the rule of three in the arithmetick of policy and state.

His grace thinks I have obtained too much. I answer, that my exertions, whatever they have been, were such as no hopes of pecuniary reward could possibly excite; and no pecuniary compensation can possibly reward them. Between money and such services, if done by abler men than I am, there is no common principle of comparison: they are quantities incommensurable. Money is made for the comfort and convenience of animal life. It cannot be a reward for what, mere animal life must indeed sustain, but never can inspire. With submission to his grace, I have not had more than sufficient. As to any noble use, I trust I know how to employ, as well as he, a much greater fortune than he possesses. In a more confined application, I certainly stand in need of every kind of relief and easement much more than he does. When I say I have not received more than I deserve,

deserve, is this the language I hold to majesty? No! Far, very far, from it! Before that presence, I claim no merit at all. Every thing towards me is favour, and bounty. One style to a gracious benefactor; another to a proud and insulting foe.

His grace is pleased to aggravate my guilt, by charging my acceptance of his majesty's grant as a departure from my ideas, and the spirit of my conduct with regard to œconomy. If it be, my ideas of œconomy were false and ill founded. But they are the duke of Bedford's ideas of œconomy I have contradicted, and not my own. If he means to allude to certain bills brought in by me on a message from the throne in 1782, I tell him, that there is nothing in my conduct that can contradict either the letter or the spirit of those acts. Does he mean the pay-office act? I take it for granted he does not. The act to which he alludes is, I suppose, the establishment act. I greatly doubt whether his grace has ever read the one or the other. The first of these systems cost me, with every assistance which my then situation gave me, pains incredible. I found an opinion common through all the offices, and general in the publick at large, that it would prove impossible to reform and methodize the office of paymaster general. I undertook it, however; and I succeeded in my undertaking. Whether the military service, or whether the general œconomy of our finances have profited

profited by that act, I leave to those who are acquainted with the army, and with the treasury, to judge.

An opinion full as general prevailed also at the same time, that nothing could be done for the regulation of the civil-list establishment. The very attempt to introduce method into it, and any limitations to its services, was held absurd. I had not seen the man, who so much as suggested one œconomical principle, or an œconomical expedient, upon that subject. Nothing but coarse amputation, or coarser taxation, were then talked of, both of them without design, combination, or the least shadow of principle. Blind and headlong zeal, or factious fury, were the whole contribution brought by the most noisy on that occasion, towards the satisfaction of the publick, or the relief of the crown.

Let me tell my youthful censor, that the necessities of that time required something very different from what others then suggested, or what his grace now conceives. Let me inform him, that it was one of the most critical periods in our annals.

Astronomers have sup osed, that if a certain comet, whose path inter pted the ecliptick, had met the earth in some (I forget what) sign, it would have whirled us ng with it, in its eccentrick course, into God l wa what regions of heat and

and cold. Had the portentous comet of the rights of man, (which " from its horrid hair shakes " pestilence, and war," and " with fear of change " perplexes monarchs") had that comet crossed upon us in that internal state of England, nothing human could have prevented our being irresistibly hurried, out of the highway of heaven, into all the vices, crimes, horrours, and miseries of the French revolution.

Happily, France was not then jacobinised. Her hostility was at a good distance. We had a limb cut off; but we preserved the body: We lost our colonies; but we kept our constitution. There was, indeed, much intestine heat; there was a dreadful fermentation. Wild and savage insurrection quitted the woods, and prowled about our streets in the name of reform. Such was the distemper of the publick mind, that there was no madman, in his maddest ideas, and maddest projects, who might not count upon numbers to support his principles and execute his designs.

Many of the changes, by a great misnomer called parliamentary reforms, went, not in the intention of all the professors and supporters of them, undoubtedly, but went in their certain, and, in my opinion, not very remote effect, home to the utter destruction of the constitution of this kingdom. Had they taken place, not France, but England, would have had the honour of leading up

up the death-dance of democratick revolution. Other projects, exactly coincident in time with those, struck at the very existence of the kingdom under any constitution. There are who remember the blind fury of some, and the lamentable helplessness of others; here, a torpid confusion, from a panick fear of the danger; there, the same inaction from a stupid insensibility to it; here well-wishers to the mischief; there, indifferent lookers-on. At the same time, a sort of national convention, dubious in its nature, and perilous in its example, nosed parliament in the very seat of its authority; sat with a sort of superintendan ceover it; and little less than dictated to it, not only laws, but the very form and essence of legislature itself. In Ireland things ran in a still more eccentrick course. Government was unnerved, confounded, and in a manner suspended. Its equipoise was totally gone. I do not mean to speak disrespectfully of lord North. He was a man of admirable parts; of general knowledge; of a versatile understanding fitted for every sort of business; of infinite wit and pleasantry; of a delightful temper; and with a mind most perfectly disinterested. But it would be only to degrade myself by a weak adulation, and not to honour the memory of a great man, to deny that he wanted something of the vigilance and spirit of command, that the time required. Indeed, a darkness, next

to

to the fog of this awful day, loured over the whole region. For a little time the helm appeared abandoned—

Ipse diem noctemque negat discernere cœlo
Nec meminisse viæ medii Palinurus in undâ.

At that time I was connected with men of high place in the community. They loved liberty as much as the duke of Bedford can do; and they understood it at least as well. Perhaps their politicks, as usual took a tincture from their character, and they cultivated what they loved. The liberty they pursued was a liberty inseparable from order, from virtue, from morals, and from religion, and was neither hypocritically nor fanatically followed. They did not wish, that liberty, in itself, one of the first of blessings, should in its perversion become the greatest curse which could fall upon mankind. To preserve the constitution entire, and practically equal to all the great ends of its formation, not in one single part, but in all its parts, was to them the first object. Popularity and power they regarded alike. These were with them only different means of obtaining that object; and had no preference over each other in their minds, but as one or the other might afford a surer or a less certain prospect of arriving at that end. It is some consolation to me in the cheerless gloom,

gloom, which darkens the evening of my life, that with them I commenced my political career, and never for a moment, in reality, nor in appearance, for any length of time, was separated from their good wishes and good opinion.

By what accident it matters not, nor upon what desert, but just then, and in the midst of that hunt of obloquy, which ever has pursued me with a full cry through life, I had obtained a very considerable degree of publick confidence. I know well enough how equivocal a test this kind of popular opinion forms of the merit that obtained it. I am no stranger to the insecurity of its tenure. I do not boast of it. It is mentioned, to shew, not how highly I prize the thing, but my right to value the use I made of it. I endeavoured to turn that short-lived advantage to myself into a permanent benefit to my country. Far am I from detracting from the merit of some gentlemen, out of office or in it, on that occasion. No!—It is not my way to refuse a full and heaped measure of justice to the aids that I receive. I have, through life, been willing to give every thing to others; and to reserve nothing for myself, but the inward conscience, that I had omitted no pains, to discover, to animate, to discipline, to direct the abilities of the country for its service, and to place them in the best light to improve their age, or to adorn it. This conscience I have. I have never suppressed

any

any man; never checked him for a moment in his course, by any jealousy, or by any policy. I was always ready, to the height of my means (and they were always infinitely below my desires) to forward those abilities which overpowered my own. He is an ill-furnished undertaker, who has no machinery but his own hands to work with. Poor in my own faculties, I ever thought myself rich in theirs. In that period of difficulty and danger, more especially, I consulted, and sincerely co-operated with men of all parties, who seemed disposed to the same ends, or to any main part of them. Nothing to prevent disorder, was omitted: when it appeared, nothing to subdue it was left uncounselled, nor unexecuted, as far as I could prevail. At the time I speak of, and having a momentary lead, so aided and so encouraged, and as a feeble instrument in a mighty hand—I do not say, I saved my country; I am sure I did my country important service. There were few, indeed, that did not at that time acknowledge it, and that time was thirteen years ago. It was but one voice, that no man in the kingdom better deserved an honourable provision should be made for him.

So much for my general conduct through the whole of the portentous crisis from 1780 to 1782, and the general sense then entertained of that conduct by my country. But my character, as a

 reformer,

reformer, in the particular instances which the duke of Bedford refers to, is so connected in principle with my opinions on the hideous changes, which have since barbarized France, and spreading thence, threaten the political and moral order of the whole world, that it seems to demand something of a more detailed discussion.

My œconomical reforms were not, as his grace may think, the suppression of a paltry pension or employment, more or less. Œconomy in my plans was, as it ought to be, secondary, subordinate, instrumental. I acted on state principles. I found a great distemper in the commonwealth; and, according to the nature of the evil and of the object, I treated it. The malady was deep; it was complicated, in the causes and in the symptoms. Throughout it was full of contra-indicants. On one hand government, daily growing more invidious from an apparent increase of the means of strength, was every day growing more contemptible by real weakness. Nor was this dissolution confined to government commonly so called. It extended to parliament; which was losing not a little in its dignity and estimation, by an opinion of its not acting on worthy motives. On the other hand, the desires of the people, (partly natural and partly infused into them by art) appeared in so wild and inconsiderate a manner, with regard to the œconomical object (for

I set

I set aside for a moment the dreadful tampering with the body of the constitution itself) that if their petitions had literally been complied with, the state would have been convulsed; and a gate would have been opened, through which all property might be sacked and ravaged. Nothing could have saved the publick from the mischiefs of the false reform but its absurdity; which would soon have brought itself, and with it all real reform, into discredit. This would have left a rankling wound in the hearts of the people, who would know they had failed in the accomplishment of their wishes, but, who, like the rest of mankind in all ages, would impute the blame to any thing rather than to their own proceedings. But there were then persons in the world, who nourished complaint; and would have been thoroughly disappointed if the people were ever satisfied. I was not of that humour. I wished that they *should* be satisfied. It was my aim to give to the people the substance of what I knew they desired, and what I thought was right, whether they desired it or not, before it had been modified for them into senseless petitions. I knew that there is a manifest marked distinction, which ill men, with ill designs, or weak men incapable of any design, will constantly be confounding, that is, a marked distinction between change and reformation. The former alters the substance of the objects themselves; and gets rid

of all their essential good, as well as of all the accidental evil annexed to them. Change is novelty; and whether it is to operate any one of the effects of reformation at all, or whether it may not contradict the very principle upon which reformation is desired, cannot be certainly known before hand. Reform is, not a change in the substance, or in the primary modification of the object, but a direct application of a remedy to the grievance complained of. So far as that is removed, all is sure. It stops there; and if it fails, the substance which underwent the operation, at the very worst, is but where it was.

All this, in effect, I think, but am not sure, I have said elsewhere. It cannot at this time be too often repeated; line upon line; precept upon precept; until it comes into the currency of a proverb, *to innovate is not to reform.* The French revolutionists complained of every thing; they refused to reform any thing; and they left nothing, no, nothing at all *unchanged.* The consequences are *before* us,—not in remote history; not in future prognostication: they are about us; they are upon us. They shake the publick security; they menace private enjoyment. They dwarf the growth of the young; the break they quiet of the old. If we travel, they stop our way. They infest us in town; they pursue us to the country. Our business is interrupted; our repose is troubled;

our

our pleasures are saddened; our very studies are poisoned and perverted, and knowledge is rendered worse than ignorance, by the enormous evils of this dreadful innovation. The revolution harpies of France, sprung from night and hell, or from that chaotick anarchy, which generates equivocally "all monstrous, all prodigious things," cuckoo-like, adulterously lay their eggs, and brood over, and hatch them in the nest of every neighbouring state. These obscene harpies, who deck themselves, in I know not what divine attributes, but who in reality are foul and ravenous birds of prey (both mothers and daughters) flutter over our heads, and souse down upon our tables, and leave nothing unrent, unrifled, unravaged, or unpolluted with the slime of their filthy offal*.

* Tristius haud illis monstrum, nec sævior ulla
Pestis, & ira Deûm Stygiis sese extulit undis.
Virginei volucrum vultus; fædissima ventris
Proluvies; uncæque manus; & pallida semper
Ora fame——

Here the Poet breaks the line, because he (and that He is Virgil) had not verse or language to describe that monster even as he had conceived her. Had he lived in our time, he would have been more overpowered with the reality than he was with the imagination. Virgil only knew the horrour of the times before him. Had he lived to see the revolutionists and constitutionalists of France, he would have had more horrid and disgusting features of his harpies to describe, and more frequent failures in the attempt to describe them.

If

If his grace can contemplate the result of this complete innovation, or, as some friends of his will call it, *reform*, in the whole body of its solidity and compound mass, at which, as Hamlet says, the face of heaven glows with horrour and indignation, and which, in truth, makes every reflecting mind, and every feeling heart, perfectly thought-sick, without a thorough abhorrence of every thing they say, and every thing they do, I am amazed at the morbid strength, or the natural infirmity of his mind.

It was then not my love, but my hatred to innovation, that produced my plan of reform. Without troubling myself with the exactness of the logical diagram, I considered them as things substantially opposite. It was to prevent that evil, that I proposed the measures, which his grace is pleased, and I am not sorry he is pleased, to recal to my recollection. I had (what I hope that noble duke will remember in all its operations) a state to preserve, as well as a state to reform. I had a people to gratify, but not to inflame, or to mislead. I do not claim half the credit for what I did, as for what I prevented from being done. In that situation of the publick mind, I did not undertake, as was then proposed, to new model the house of commons or the house of lords; or to change the authority under which any officer of the crown, acted, who was suffered at all to exist. Crown, lords, commons, judicial system, system of administration,

nistration, existed as they had existed before; and in the mode and manner in which they had always existed. My measures were, what I then truly stated them to the house to be, in their intent, healing and mediatorial. A complaint was made of too much influence in the house of commons; I reduced it in both houses; and I gave my reasons article by article for every reduction, and shewed why I thought it safe for the service of the state. I heaved the lead every inch of way I made. A disposition to expence was complained of; to that I opposed, not mere retrenchment, but a system of œconomy, which would make a random expence without plan or foresight, in future not easily practicable. I proceeded upon principles of research to put me in possession of my matter; on principles of method to regulate it; and on principles in the human mind and in civil affairs to secure and perpetuate the operation. I conceived nothing arbitrarily; nor proposed any think to be done by the will and pleasure of others, or my own; but by reason, and by reason only. I have ever abhorred, since the first dawn of my understanding to this its obscure twilight, all the operations of opinion, fancy, inclination, and will, in the affairs of government, where only a sovereign reason, paramount to all forms of legislation and administration, should dictate. Government is made for the very purpose of opposing that reason to

will

will and to caprice, in the reformers or in the reformed, in the governors or in the governed, in kings, in senates, or in people.

On a careful review, therefore, and analysis of all the component parts of the civil list, and on weighing them against each other, in order to make, as much as possible, all of them a subject of estimate (the foundation and corner-stone of all regular provident œconomy) it appeared to me evident, that this was impracticable, whilst that part, called the pension list, was totally discretionary in its amount. For this reason, and for this only, I proposed to reduce it, both in its gross quantity, and in its larger individual proportions, to a certainty: lest, if it were left without a *general* limit, it might eat up the civil list service; if suffered to be granted in portions too great for the fund, it might defeat its own end; and by unlimited allowances to some, it might disable the crown in means of providing for others. The pension list was to be kept as a sacred fund; but it could not be kept as a constant open fund, sufficient for growing demands, if some demands would wholly devour it. The tenour of the act will shew that it regarded the civil list *only*, the reduction of which to some sort of estimate was my great object.

No other of the crown funds did I meddle with, because they had not the same relations. This of the four and a half per cents. does his grace imagine

imagine had escaped me, or had escaped all the men of business, who acted with me in those regulations? I knew that such a fund existed, and that pensions had been always granted on it, before his grace was born. This fund was full in my eye. It was full in the eyes of those who worked with me. It was left on principle. On principle I did what was then done; and on principle what was left undone was omitted. I did not dare to rob the nation of all funds to reward merit. If I pressed this point too close, I acted contrary to the avowed principles on which I went. Gentlemen are very fond of quoting me; but if any one thinks it worth his while to know the rules that guided me in my plan of reform, he will read my printed speech on that subject; at least what is contained from page 230 to page 241 in the second volume of the collection which a friend has given himself the trouble to make of my publications. Be this as it may, these two bills (though achieved with the greatest labour, and management of every sort, both within and without the house) were only a part, and but a small part, of a very large system, comprehending all the objects I stated in opening my proposition, and indeed many more, which I just hinted at in my speech to the electors of Bristol, when I was put out of that representation. All these, in some state or other of forwardness, I have long had by me.

But

But do I justify his majesty's grace on these grounds? I think them the least of my services! The time gave them an occasional value: What I have done in the way of political œconomy was far from confined to this body of measures. I did not come into parliament to con my lesson. I had earned my pension before I set my foot in St. Stephen's chapel. I was prepared and disciplined to this political warfare. The first session I sat in parliament, I found it necessary to analyze the whole commercial, financial, constitutional and foreign interests of Great Britain and its empire. A great deal was then done; and more, far more would have been done, if more had been permitted by events. Then in the vigour of my manhood, my constitution sunk under my labour. Had I then died, (and I seemed to myself very near death) I had then earned for those who belonged to me, more than the duke of Bedford's ideas of service are of power to estimate. But in truth, these services I am called to account for, are not those on which I value myself the most. If I were to call for a reward (which I have never done) it should be for those in which for fourteen years, without intermission, I shewed the most industry, and had the least success; I mean in the affairs of India. They are those on which I value myself the most; most for the importance; most for the labour; most for the judgment; most for constancy and perseverance

perseverance in the pursuit. Others may value them most for the *intention*. In that, surely, they are not mistaken.

Does his grace think, that they who advised the crown to make my retreat easy, considered me only as an œconomist? That, well understood, however, is a good deal. If I had not deemed it of some value, I should not have made political œconomy an object of my humble studies, from my very early youth to near the end of my service in parliament, even before (at least to any knowledge of mine) it had employed the thoughts of speculative men in other parts of Europe. At that time it was still in its infancy in England, where, in the last century, it had its origin. Great and learned men thought my studies were not wholly thrown away, and deigned to communicate with me now and then on some particulars of their immortal works. Something of these studies may appear incidentally in some of the earliest things I published. The house has been witness to their effect, and has profited of them more or less, for above eight and twenty years.

To their estimate I leave the matter. I was not, like his grace of Bedford, swaddled, and rocked, and dandled into a legislator; "*Nitor in adversum*" is the motto for a man like me. I possessed not one of the qualities, nor cultivated one of the arts that recommend men to the favour and protection of

of the great. I was not made for a minion or a tool. As little did I follow the trade of winning the hearts, by imposing on the understandings, of the people. At every step of my progress in life (for in every step was I traversed and opposed), and at every turnpike I met, I was obliged to shew my passport, and again and again to prove my sole title to the honour of being useful to my country, by a proof that I was not wholly unacquainted with its laws, and the whole system of its interests both abroad and at home. Otherwise no rank, no toleration even, for me. I had no arts, but manly arts. On them I have stood, and, please God, in spite of the duke of Bedford and the earl of Lauderdale, to the last gasp will I stand.

Had his grace condescended to inquire concerning the person, whom he has not thought it below him to reproach, he might have found, that in the whole course of my life, I have never, on any pretence of œconomy, or on any other pretence, so much as in a single instance, stood between any man and his reward of service, or his encouragement in useful talent and pursuit, from the highest of those services and pursuits to the lowest. On the contrary I have, on an hundred occasions, exerted myself with singular zeal to forward every man's even tolerable pretensions. I have more than once had good-natured reprehensions from my friends for carrying the matter to something bordering

bordering on abuse. This line of conduct, whatever its merits might be, was partly owing to natural disposition; but I think full as much to reason and principle. I looked on the consideration of publick service, or publick ornament, to be real and very justice: and I ever held a scanty and penurious justice to partake of the nature of a wrong. I held it to be, in its consequences, the worst œconomy in the world. In saving money, I soon can count up all the good I do; but when by a cold penury, I blast the abilities of a nation, and stunt the growth of its active energies, the ill I may do is beyond all calculation. Whether it be too much or too little, whatever I have done has been general and systematick. I have never entered into those trifling vexations and oppressive details, that have been falsely, and most ridiculously laid to my charge.

Did I blame the pensions given to Mr. Barré and Mr. Dunning between the proposition and execution of my plan? No! surely no! Those pensions were within my principles. I sssert it, those gentlemen deserved their pensions, their titles—all they had; and more had they had, I should have been but pleased the more. They were men of talents; they were men of service. I put the profession of the law out of the question in one of them. It is a service that rewards itself. But their *publick service*, though, from their abilities unquestionably of more value

value than mine, in its quantity and in its duration was not to be mentioned with it. But I never could drive a hard bargain in my life, concerning any matter whatever; and least of all do I know how to haggle and huckster with merit. Pension for myself I obtained none; nor did I solicit any. Yet I was loaded with hatred for every thing that was withheld, and with obloquy for every thing that was given. I was thus left to support the grants of a name ever dear to me, and ever venerable to the world, in favour of those, who were no friends of mine or of his, against the rude attacks of those who were at that time friends to the grantees, and their own zealous partisans. I have never heard the earl of Lauderdale complain of these pensions. He finds nothing wrong till he comes to me. This is impartiality, in the true modern revolutionary style.

Whatever I did at that time, so far as it regarded order and œconomy, is stable and eternal; as all principles must be. A particular order of things may be altered; order itself cannot lose its value. As to other particulars, they are variable by time and by circumstances. Laws of regulation are not fundamental laws. The publick exigencies are the masters of all such laws. They rule the laws, and are not to be ruled by them. They who exercise the legislative power at the time must judge.

It may be new to his grace, but I beg leave to tell him,

him, that mere parsimony is not œconomy. It is separable in theory from it; and in fact it may, or it may not, be a *part* of œconomy, according to circumstances. Expence, and great expence, may be an essential part in true œconomy. If parsimony were to be considered as one of the kinds of that virtue, there is however another and an higher œconomy. Œconomy is a distributive virtue, and consists not in saving, but in selection. Parsimony requires no providence, no sagacity, no powers of combination, no comparison, no judgment. Mere instinct, and that not an instinct of the noblest kind, may produce this false œconomy in perfection. The other œconomy has larger views. It demands a discriminating judgment, and a firm sagacious mind. It shuts one door to impudent importunity, only to open another, and a wider, to unpresuming merit. If none but meritorious service or real talent were to be rewarded, this nation has not wanted, and this nation will not want, the means of rewarding all the service it ever will receive, and encouraging all the merit it ever will produce. No state, since the foundation of society, has been impoverished by that species of profusion. Had the œconomy of selection and proportion been at all times observed, we should not now have had an overgrown duke of Bedford, to oppress the industry of humble men, and to limit by the standard

of his own conceptions, the justice, the bounty, or, if he pleases, the charity of the crown.

His grace may think as meanly as he will of my deserts in the far greater part of my conduct in life. It is free for him to do so. There will always be some difference of opinion in the value of political services. But there is one merit of mine, which he, of all men living, ought to be the last to call in question. I have supported with very great zeal, and I am told with some degree of success, those opinions, or if his grace likes another expression better, those old prejudices which buoy up the ponderous mass of his nobility, wealth, and titles. I have omitted no exertion to prevent him and them from sinking to that level, to which the meretricious French faction, his grace at least coquets with, omit no exertion to reduce both. I have done all I could to discountenance their inquiries into the fortunes of those, who hold large portions of wealth without any apparent merit of their own. I have strained every nerve to keep the duke of Bedford in that situation, which alone makes him my superiour. Your Lordship has been a witness of the use he makes of that pre-eminence.

But be it, that this is virtue! Be it, that there is virtue in this well selected rigour; yet all virtues are not equally becoming to all men and at all times.

times. There are crimes, undoubtedly there are crimes, which in all seasons of our existence, ought to put a generous antipathy in action; crimes that provoke an indignant justice, and call forth a warm and animated pursuit. But all things, that concern, what I may call, the preventive police of morality, all things merely rigid, harsh and censorial, the antiquated moralists, at whose feet I was brought up, would not have thought these the fittest matter to form the favourite virtues of young men of rank. What might have been well enough, and have been received with a veneration mixed with awe and terrour, from an old, severe, crabbed Cato, would have wanted something of propriety in the young Scipios, the ornament of the Roman nobility, in the flower of their life. But the times, the morals, the masters, the scholars have all undergone a thorough revolution. It is a vile illiberal school, this new French academy of the *sans culottes*. There is nothing in it that is fit for a gentleman to learn.

Whatever its vogue may be, I still flatter myself, that the parents of the growing generation will be satisfied with what is to be taught to their children in Westminster, in Eton, or in Winchester: I still indulge the hope that no *grown* gentleman or nobleman of our time will think of finishing at Mr. Thelwall's lecture whatever may have been left incomplete at the old universities of

his country. I would give to lord Grenville and Mr. Pitt for a motto, what was said of a Roman censor or prætor (or what was he), who in virtue of a Senatus consultum shut up certain academies,

"*Cludere ludum impudentiæ jussit.*"

Every honest father of a family in the kingdom will rejoice at the breaking up for the holidays, and will pray that there may be a very long vacation in all such schools.

The awful state of the time, and not myself or my own justification, is my true object in what I now write; or in what I shall ever write or say. It little signifies to the world what becomes of such things as me, or even as the duke of Bedford. What I say about either of us is nothing more than a vehicle, as you, my lord, will easily perceive, to convey my sentiments on matters far more worthy of your attention. It is when I stick to my apparent first subject that I ought to apologize, not when I depart from it. I therefore must beg your lordship's pardon for again resuming it after this very short digression; assuring you that I shall never altogether lose sight of such matter as persons abler than I am may turn to some profit.

The duke of Bedford conceives, that he is obliged to call the attention of the house of peers to his majesty's grant to me, which he considers as excessive and out of all bounds.

I know

I know not how it has happened, but it really seems, that, whilst his grace was meditating his well-considered censure upon me, he fell into a sort of sleep. Homer nods; and the duke of Bedford may dream; and as dreams (even in his golden dreams) are apt to be ill-pieced and incongruously put together, his grace preserved his idea of reproach to *me*, but took the subject-matter from the crown-grants *to his own family*. This is "the stuff "of which his dreams are made." In that way of putting things together his grace is perfectly in the right. The grants to the house of Russel were so enormous, as not only to outrage economy, but even to stagger credibility. The duke of Bedford is the leviathan among all the creatures of the crown. He tumbles about his unwieldy bulk; he plays and frolicks in the ocean of the royal bounty. Huge as he is, and whilst "he lies float-"ing many a rood," he is still a creature. His ribs, his fins, his whalebone, his blubber, the very spiracles through which he spouts a torrent of brine against his origin, and covers me all over with the spray,—every thing of him and about him is from the throne. Is it for *him* to question the dispensation of the royal favour.

I really am at a loss to draw any sort of parallel between the public merits of his grace, by which he justifies the grants he holds, and these services of mine, on the favourable construction of which

I have obtained what his grace so much disapproves. In private life, I have not at all the honour of acquaintance with the noble duke. But I ought to presume, and it costs me nothing to do so, that he abundantly deserves the esteem and love of all who live with him. But as to publick service, why truly it would not be more ridiculous for me to compare myself in rank, in fortune, in splendid descent, in youth, strength, or figure, with the duke of Bedford, than to make a parallel between his services, and my attempts to be useful to my country. It would not be gross adulation, but uncivil irony, to say, that he has any publick merit of his own to keep alive the idea of the services by which his vast landed pensions were obtained. My merits, whatever they are, are original and personal; his are derivative. It is his ancestor, the original pensioner, that has laid up this inexhaustible fund of merit, which makes his grace so very delicate and exceptious about the merit of all other grantees of the crown. Had he permitted me to remain in quiet, I should have said, 'tis his estate; that's enough. It is his by law; what have I to do with it or its history? He would naturally have said on his side, 'tis this man's fortune.—He is as good now as my ancestor was two hundred and fifty years ago. I am a young man with very old pensions; he is an old man with very young pensions,—that's all.

Why

Why will his grace, by attacking me, force me reluctantly to compare my little merit with that which obtained from the crown those prodigies of profuse donation by which he tramples on the mediocrity of humble and laborious individuals? I would willingly leave him to the herald's college, which the philosophy of the sans culottes, (prouder by far than all the Garters, and Norroys and Clarencieux, and Rouge Dragons that ever pranced in a procession of what his friends call aristocrats and despots) will abolish with contumely and scorn. These historians, recorders, and blazoners of virtues and arms, differ wholly from that other description of historians, who never assign any act of politicians to a good motive. These gentle historians, on the contrary, dip their pens in nothing but the milk of human kindness. They seek no further for merit than the preamble of a patent, or the inscription of a tomb. With them every man created a peer is first an hero ready made. They judge of every man's capacity for office by the offices he has filled; and the more offices the more ability. Every general-officer with them is a Marlborough; every statesman a Burleigh; every judge a Murray or a Yorke. They who alive, were laughed at or pitied by all their acquaintance, make as good a figure as the best of them in the pages of Guillim, Edmondson, and Collins.

To these recorders, so full of good nature to the great

great and prosperous, I would willingly leave the first baron Russel, and earl of Bedford, and the merits of his grants. But the aulnager, the weigher, the meter of grants, will not suffer us to acquiesce in the judgement of the prince reigning at the time when they were made. They are never good to those who earn them. Well then; since the new grantees have war made on them by the old, and that the word of the sovereign is not to be taken, let us turn our eyes to history, in which great men have always a pleasure in contemplating the heroick origin of their house.

The first peer of the name, the first purchaser of the grants, was a Mr. Russel, a person of an ancient gentleman's family raised by being a minion of Henry the Eighth. As there generally is some resemblance of character to create these relations, the favourite was in all likelihood much such another as his master. The first of those immoderate grants was not taken from the ancient demesne of the crown, but from the recent confiscation of the ancient nobility of the land. The lion having sucked the blood of his prey, threw the offal carcase to the jackall in waiting. Having tasted once the food of confiscation, the favourites became fierce and ravenous. This worthy favourite's first grant was from the lay nobility. The second, infinitely improving on the enormity of the first, was from the plunder of the church.

In

In truth his grace is somewhat excusable for his dislike to a grant like mine, not only in its quantity, but in its kind so different from his own.

Mine was from a mild and benevolent sovereign; his from Henry the Eighth.

Mine had not its fund in the murder of any innocent person of illustrious rank *, or in the pillage of any body of unoffending men. His grants were from the aggregate and consolidated funds of judgments iniquitously legal, and from possessions voluntarily surrendered by the lawful proprietors with the gibbet at their door.

The merit of the grantee whom he derives from, was that of being a prompt and greedy instrument of a *levelling* tyrant, who oppressed all descriptions of his people, but who fell with particular fury on every thing that was *great and noble*. Mine has been, in endeavouring to screen every man, in every class, from oppression, and particularly in defending the high and eminent, who in the bad times of confiscating princes, confiscating chief governours, or confiscating demagogues, are the most exposed to jealousy, avarice and envy.

The merit of the original grantee of his grace's pensions, was in giving his hand to the work, and partaking the spoil with a prince, who plundered a part of the national church of his time and country.

* See the history of the melancholy catastrophe of the Duke of Buckingham. Temp. Hen. 8.

Mine

Mine was in defending the whole of the national church of my own time and my own country, and the whole of the national churches of all countries, from the principles and the examples which lead to ecclesiastical pillage, thence to a contempt of *all* prescriptive titles, thence to the pillage of *all* property, and thence to universal desolation.

The merit of the origin of his grace's fortune was in being a favourite and chief adviser to a prince, who left no liberty to their native country. My endeavour was to obtain liberty for the municipal country in which I was born, and for all descriptions and denominations in it. Mine was to support with unrelaxing vigilance every right, every privilege, every franchise, in this my adopted, my dearer and more comprehensive country; and not only to preserve those rights in this chief seat of empire, but in every nation, in every land, in every climate, language and religion, in the vast domain that is still under the protection, and the larger that was once under the protection, of the British crown.

His founder's merits were, by arts in which he served his master and made his fortune, to bring poverty, wretchedness and depopulation on his country. Mine were under a benevolent prince, in promoting the commerce, manufactures and agriculture of his kingdom; in which his majesty shews

shews an eminent example, who even in his amusements is a patriot, and in hours of leisure an improver of his native soil.

His founder's merit, was the merit of a gnetleman raised by the arts of a court, and the protection of a Wolsey, to the eminence of a great and potent lord. His merit in that eminence was by instigating a tyrant to injustice, to provoke a people to rebellion. My merit was, to awaken the sober part of the country, that they might put themselves on their guard against any one potent lord, or any greater number of potent lords, or any combination of great leading men of any sort, if ever they should attempt to proceed in the same courses, but in the reverse order, that is, by instigating a corrupted populace to rebellion, and, through that rebellion, introducing a tyranny yet worse than the tyranny which his grace's ancestor supported, and of which he profited in the manner we behold in the despotism of Henry the Eighth.

The political merit of the first pensioner of his grace's house, was that of being concerned as a counsellor of state in advising, and in his person executing the conditions of a dishonourable peace with France; the surrendering the fortress of Boulogne, then our out-guard on the continent. By that surrender, Calais, the key of France, and the bridle in the mouth of that power, was, not many years

years afterwards, finally lost. My merit has been in resisting the power and pride of France, under any form of its rule; but in opposing it with the greatest zeal and earnestness, when that rule appeared in the worst form it could assume; the worst indeed which the prime cause and principle of all evil could possibly give it. It was my endeavour by every means to excite a spirit in the house, where I had the honour of a seat, for carrying on with early vigour and decision, the most clearly just and necessary war, that this or any nation ever carried on; in order to save my country from the iron yoke of its power, and from the more dreadful contagion of its principles; to preserve, while they can be preserved, pure and untainted, the ancient, inbred integrity, piety, good nature, and good humour of the people of England, from the dreadful pestilence which beginning in France, threatens to lay waste the whole moral, and in a great degree the whole physical world, having done both in the focus of its most intense malignity.

The labour of his grace's founder merited the curses, not loud but deep, of the commons of England, on whom *he* and his master had effected a *complete parliamentary reform*, by making them in their slavery and humiliation, the true and adequate representatives of a debased, degraded, and undone people. My merits were, in having had

an

an active, though not always an ostentatious share, in every one act, without exception, of undisputed constitutional utility in my time, and in having supported on all occasions, the authority, the efficiency, and the privileges of the commons of Great Britain. I ended my services by a recorded and fully reasoned assertion on their own journals of their constitutional rights, and a vindication of their constitutional conduct. I laboured in all things to merit their inward approbation, and (along with the assistance of the largest, the greatest, and best of my endeavours) I received their free, unbiassed, publick, and solemn thanks.

Thus stands the account of the comparative merits of the crown grants which compose the duke of Bedford's fortune as balanced against mine. In the name of common sense, why should the duke of Bedford think, that none but of the house of Russel are entitled to the favour of the crown? Why should he imagine that no king of England has been capable of judging of merit but king Henry the Eighth? Indeed, he will pardon me; he is a little mistaken; all virtue did not end in the first earl of Bedford. All discernment did not lose its vision when his creator closed his eyes. Let him remit his rigour on the disproportion between merit and reward in others, and they will make no inquiry into the origin of his fortune. They will regard with much more satisfaction, as

he will contemplate with infinitely more advantage, whatever in his pedigree has been dulcified by an exposure to the influence of heaven in a long flow of generations, from the hard, acidulous, metallick tincture of the spring. It is little to be doubted, that several of his forefathers in that long series, have degenerated into honour and virtue. Let the duke of Bedford (I am sure he will) reject with scorn and horrour, the counsels of the lecturers, those wicked panders to avarice and ambition, who would tempt him in the troubles of his country, to seek another enormous fortune from the forfeitures of another nobility, and the plunder of another church. Let him, (and I trust that yet he will) employ all the energy of his youth, and all the resources of his wealth, to crush rebellious principles which have no foundation in morals, and rebellious movements that have no provocation in tyranny.

Then will be forgot the rebellions, which, by a doubtful priority in crime, his ancestor had provoked and extinguished. On such a conduct in the noble duke, many of his countrymen might, and with some excuse might, give way to the enthusiasm of their gratitude, and in the dashing style of some of the old declaimers, cry out, that if the fates had found no other way in which they could give a * duke of Bedford and his opulence

* At si non aliam venturo fata Neroni, &c.

as

as props to a tottering world, then the butchery of the duke of Buckingham might be tolerated; it might be regarded even with complacency, whilst in the heir of confiscation they saw the sympathizing comforter of the martyrs, who suffer under the cruel confiscation of this day; whilst they behold with admiration his zealous protection of the virtuous and loyal nobility of France, and his manly support of his brethren, the yet standing nobility and gentry of his native land. Then his grace's merit would be pure and new, and sharp, as fresh from the mint of honour. As he pleased he might reflect honour on his predecessors, or throw it forward on those who were to succeed him. He might be the propagator of the stock of honour, or the root of it, as he thought proper.

Had it pleased God to continue to me the hopes of succession, I should have been according to my mediocrity, and the mediocrity of the age I live in, a sort of founder of a family; I should have left a son, who, in all the points in which personal merit can be viewed, in science, in erudition, in genius, in taste, in honour, in generosity, in humanity, in every liberal sentiment, and every liberal accomplishment, would not have shewn himself inferiour to the duke of Bedford, or to any of those whom he traces in his line. His grace very soon would have wanted all plausibility in his attack

upon

upon that provision which belonged more to mine than to me. HE would soon have supplied every deficiency, and symmetrized every disproportion. It would not have been for that successor to resort to any stagnant wasting reservoir of merit in me, or in any ancestry. He had in himself a salient, living spring, of generous and manly action. Every day he lived he would have re-purchased the bounty of the crown, and ten times more, if ten times more he had received. He was made a publick creature; and had no enjoyment whatever, but in the performance of some duty. At this exigent moment, the loss of a finished man is not easily supplied.

But a disposer whose power we are little able to resist, and whose wisdom it behoves us not at all to dispute; has ordained it in another manner, and (whatever my querulous weakness might suggest) a far better. The storm has gone over me; and I lie like one of those old oaks which the late hurricane has scattered about me. I am stripped of all my honours; I am torn up by the roots, and lie prostrate on the earth! There, and prostrate there, I most unfeignedly recognise the divine justice, and in some degree submit to it. But whilst I humble myself before God, I do not know that it is forbidden to repel the attacks of unjust and inconsiderate men. The patience of Job is proverbial. After some of the convulsive struggles of

of our irritable nature, he submitted himself, and repented in dust and ashes. But even so, I do not find him blamed for reprehending, and with a considerable degree of verbal asperity, those ill-natured neighbours of his, who visited his dunghill to read moral, political, and oeconomical lectures on his misery. I am alone. I have none to meet my enemies in the gate. Indeed, my lord, I greatly deceive myself, if in this hard season I would give a peck of refuse wheat for all that is called fame and honour in the world. This is the appetite but of a few. It is a luxury; it is a privilege: it is an indulgence for those who are at their ease. But we are all of us made to shun disgrace, as we are made to shrink from pain, and poverty, and disease. It is an instinct; and under the direction of reason, instinct is always in the right. I live in an inverted order. They who ought to have succeeded me have gone before me. They who should have been to me as posterity are in the place of ancestors. I owe to the dearest relation (which ever must subsist in memory) that act of piety, which he would have performed to me; I owe it to him to shew that he was not descended, as the duke of Bedford would have it, from an unworthy parent.

The crown has considered me after long service: the crown has paid the duke of Bedford by advance. He has had a long credit for any service which

which he may perform hereafter. He is secure, and long may he be secure, in his advance, whether he performs any services or not. But let him take care how he endangers the safety of that constitution which secures his own utility or his own insignificance; or how he discourages those, who take up, even puny arms, to defend an order of things, which, like the sun of heaven, shines alike on the useful and the worthless. His grants are engrafted on the publick law of Europe, covered with the awful hoar of innumerable ages. They are guarded by the sacred rules of prescription, found in that full treasury of jurisprudence from which the jejuneness and penury of our municipal law has, by degrees, been enriched and strengthened, This prescription I had my share (a very full share) in bringing to its perfection*. The duke of Bedford will stand as long as prescriptive law endures: as long as the great stable laws of property common to us with all civilized nations, are kept in their integrity, and without the smallest intermixture of laws, maxims, principles, or precedents of the grand revolution. They are secure against all changes but one. The whole revolutionary system, institutes, digest, code, novels, text, gloss, comment, are, not only not the same, but they are the very reverse, and the reverse

* Sir George Savile's Act called The *Nullum Tempus* Act.

funda-

fundamentally, all of the laws, on which civil life has hitherto been upheld in all the governments of the world. The learned professors of the rights of man regard prescription, not as a title to bar all claim, set up against all possession—but they look on prescription as itself a bar against the possessor and proprietor. They hold an immemorial possession to be no more than a long continued, and therefore an aggravated injustice.

Such are *their* ideas; such *their* religion, and such *their* law. But as to *our* country and *our* race, as long as the well compacted structure of our church and state, the sanctuary, the holy of holies of that ancient law, defended by reverence, defended by power, a fortress at once and a temple *, shall stand inviolate on the brow of the British Sion—as long as the British monarchy, not more limited than fenced by the orders of the state, shall, like the proud Keep of Windsor, rising in the majesty of proportion, and girt with the double belt of its kindred and coeval towers, as long as this awful structure shall oversee and guard the subjected land—so long the mounds and dykes of the low, fat, Bedford level will have nothing to fear from all the pickaxes of all the levellers of France. As long as our sovereign lord the king, and his faithful subjects, the lords and commons of this

* *Templum in modum arcis.* Tacitus of the temple of Jerusalem.

realm,—the triple cord, which no man can break; the solemn, sworn, constitutional frank-pledge of this nation; the firm guarantees of each others being, and each others rights; the joint and several securities, each in its place and order, for every kind and every quality, of property and of dignity.—As long as these endure, so long the duke of Bedford is safe: and we are all safe together—the high from the blights of envy and the spoliations of rapacity; the low from the iron hand of oppression and the insolent spurn of contempt. Amen! and so be it: and so it will be,

Dum domus Æneæ Capitoli immobile saxum
Accolet; imperiumque pater Romanus habebit.—

But if the rude inroad of Gallick tumult, with its sophistical rights of man, to falsify the account, and its sword as a makeweight to throw into the scale, shall be introduced into our city by a misguided populace, set on by proud great men, themselves blinded and intoxicated by a frantick ambition, we shall, all of us, perish and be overwhelmed in a common ruin. If a great storm blow on our coast, it will cast the whales on the strand as well as the periwinkles. His grace will not survive the poor grantee he despises, no not for a twelvemonth. If the great look for safety in the services they render to this Gallick cause, it is to be foolish,

even

even above the weight of privilege allowed to wealth. If his Grace be one of these whom they endeavour to proselytize, he ought to be aware of the character of the sect, whose doctrines he is invited to embrace. With them insurrection is the most sacred of revolutionary duties to the state. Ingratitude to benefactors is the first of revolutionary virtues. Ingratitude is indeed their four cardinal virtues compacted and amalgamated into one; and he will find it in every thing that has happened since the commencement of the philosophick revolution to this hour. If he pleads the merit of having performed the duty of insurrection against the order he lives (God forbid he ever should), the merit of others will be to perform the duty of insurrection against him. If he pleads (again God forbid he should, and I do not suspect he will) his ingratitude to the crown for its creation of his family, others will plead their right and duty to pay him in kind. They will laugh, indeed they will laugh, at his parchment and his wax. His deeds will be drawn out with the rest of the number of his evidence room, and burnt to the tune of *ça ira* in the courts of Bedford (then Equality) house.

Am I to blame, if I attempt to pay his Grace's hostile reproaches to me with a friendly admonition to himself? Can I be blamed, for pointing out to him in what manner he is like to be affected, if the sect of the cannibal philosophers of France should

proselytize any considerable part of this people, and by their joint proselytizing arms, should conquer that government, to which his Grace does not seem to me to give all the support his own security demands? Surely it is proper, that he, and that others like him, should know the true genius of this sect; what their opinions are, what they have done; and to whom; and what, (if a prognostick is to be formed from the dispositions and actions of men) it is certain they will do hereafter. He ought to know, that they have sworn assistance, the only engagements they ever will keep, to all in this country, who bear a resemblance to themselves, and who think as such, that *The whole duty of man* consists in destruction. They are a misallied and disparaged branch of the house of Nimrod. They are the duke of Bedford's natural hunters; and he is their natural game. Because he is not very profoundly reflecting, he sleeps in profound security: they, on the contrary, are always vigilant, active, enterprising, and, though far removed from any knowledge which makes men estimable or useful, in all the instruments and resources of evil, their leaders are not meanly instructed, or insufficiently furnished. In the French revolution every thing is new; and, from want of preparation to meet so unlooked-for an evil, every thing is dangerous. Never, before this time, was a set of literary men, converted into a gang of robbers and

assassins.

assassins. Never before, did a den of bravoes and banditti, assume the garb and tone of an academy of philosophers.

Let me tell his Grace, that an union of such characters, monstrous as it seems, is not made for producing despicable enemies. But if they are formidable as foes, as friends they are dreadful indeed. The men of property in France confiding in a force, which seemed to be irresistible, because it had never been tried, neglected to prepare for a conflict with their enemies at their own weapons. They were found in such a situation as the Mexicans were, when they were attacked by the dogs, the cavalry, the iron, and the gunpowder of an handful of bearded men, whom they did not know to exist in nature. This is a comparison that some, I think, have made; and it is just. In France they had their enemies within their houses. They were even in the bosoms of many of them. But they had not sagacity to discern their savage character. They seemed tame, and even caressing. They had nothing but *douce humanité* in their mouth. They could not bear the punishment of the mildest laws on the greatest criminals. The slightest severity of justice made their flesh creep. The very idea that war existed in the world disturbed their repose. Military glory was no more, with them, than a splendid infamy. Hardly would they hear of self-

defence,

defence, which they reduced within such bounds, as to leave it no defence at all. All this while they meditated the confiscations and massacres we have seen. Had any one told these unfortunate noblemen and gentlemen, how, and by whom, the grand fabrick of the French monarchy under which they flourished would be subverted, they would not have pitied him as a visionary, but would have turned from him as what they call a *mauvais plaisant*. Yet we have seen what has happened. The persons who have suffered from the cannibal philosophy of France, are so like the duke of Bedford, that nothing but his Grace's probably not speaking quite so good French, could enable us to find out any difference. A great many of them had as pompous titles as he, and were of full as illustrious a race: some few of them had fortunes as ample; several of them, without meaning the least disparagement to the duke of Bedford, were as wise, and as virtuous, and as valiant, and as well educated, and as complete in all the lineaments of men of honour as he is: And to all this they had added the powerful outguard of a military profession, which, in its nature, renders men somewhat more cautious than those, who have nothing to attend to but the lazy enjoyment of undisturbed possessions. But security was their ruin. They are dashed to pieces in the storm, and our shores are covered

covered with the wrecks. If they had been aware that such a thing might happen, such a thing never could have happened.

I assure his Grace, that if I state to him the designs of his enemies, in a manner which may appear to him ludicrous and impossible, I tell him nothing that has not exactly happened, point by point, but twenty-four miles from our own shore. I assure him that the Frenchified faction, more encouraged, than others are warned, by what has happened in France, look at him and his landed possessions, as an object at once of curiosity and rapacity. He is made for them in every part of their double character. As robbers, to them he is a noble booty: as speculatists, he is a glorious subject for their experimental philosophy. He affords matter for an extensive analysis, in all the branches of their science, geometrical, physical, civil, and political. These philosophers are fanaticks; independent of any interest, which if it operated alone would make them much more tractable, they are carried with such an headlong rage towards every desperate trial, that they would sacrifice the whole human race to the slightest of their experiments. I am better able to enter into the character of this description of men than the noble Duke can be. I have lived long and variously in the world. Without any considerable pretensions to literature in myself, I have aspired to the love of letters. I have

lived

lived for a great many years in habitudes with those who professed them. I can form a tolerable estimate of what is likely to happen from a character, chiefly dependent for fame and fortune, on knowledge and talent, as well in its morbid and perverted state, as in that which is sound and natural. Naturally men so formed and finished are the first gifts of Providence to the world. But when they have once thrown off the fear of God, which was in all ages too often the case, and the fear of man, which is now the case, and when in that state they come to understand one another, and to act in corps, a more dreadful calamity cannot arise out of hell to scourge mankind. Nothing can be conceived more hard than the heart of a thoroughbred metaphysician. It comes nearer to the cold malignity of a wicked spirit than to the frailty and passion of a man. It is like that of the principle of evil himself incorporeal, pure, unmixed, dephlegmated, defacated evil. It is no easy operation to eradicate humanity from the human breast. What Shakespeare calls "the compunctious visitings of nature," will sometimes knock at their hearts, and protest against their murderous speculations. But they have a means of compounding with their nature. Their humanity is not dissolved. They only give it a long prorogation. They are ready to declare, that they do not think two thousand years too long a period for the good that they pursue.

pursue. It is remarkable, that they never see any way to their projected good but by the road of some evil. Their imagination is not fatigued with the contemplation of human suffering through the wild waste of centuries added to centuries of misery and desolation. Their humanity is at their horizon—and, like the horizon, it always flies before them. The geometricians, and the chymists bring, the one from the dry bones of their diagrams, and the other from the soot of their furnaces, dispositions that make them worse than indifferent about those feelings and habitudes, which are the supports of the moral world. Ambition is come upon them suddenly; they are intoxicated with it, and it has rendered them fearless of the danger, which may from thence arise to others or to themselves. These philosophers, consider men in their experiments, no more than they do mice in an air pump, or in a recipient of mephitick gas. Whatever his Grace may think of himself, they look upon him, and every thing that belongs to him, with no more regard than they do upon the whiskers of that little long-tailed animal, that has been long the cause of the grave, demure, insidious, spring-nailed, velvet-pawed, green-eyed philosophers, whether going upon two legs, or upon four.

His Grace's landed possessions are a reasonably inviting to an *agrarian* experiment. They are a downright insult upon the rights of man. They

are more extensive than the territory of many of the Grecian republicks; and they are without comparison more fertile than most of them. There are now republicks in Italy, in Germany, and in Swisserland, which do not possess any thing like so fair and ample a domain. There is a scope for seven philosophers to proceed in their analytical experiments, upon Harrington's seven different forms of republicks, in the acres of this one Duke. Hitherto they have been wholly unproductive to speculation; fitted for nothing but to fatten bullocks, and to produce grain for beer, still more to stupify the dull English understanding. Abbé Sieyes has whole nests of pigeon-holes full of constitutions ready made, ticketed, sorted, and numbered; suited to every season and every fancy; some with the top of the pattern at the bottom, and some with the bottom at the top; some plain, some flowered; some distinguished for their simplicity; others for their complexity; some of blood colour; some of *boue de Paris;* some with directories, others without a direction; some with councils of elders, and councils of youngsters; some without any council at all. Some where the electors choose the representatives; others, where the representatives choose the electors. Some in long coats, and some in short cloaks; some with pantaloons; some without breeches. Some with five shilling qualifications; some totally unqualified. So that no constitution,

stitution-fancier may go unsuited from his shop, provided he loves a pattern of pillage, oppression, arbitrary imprisonment, confiscation, exile, revolutionary judgment, and legalized premeditated murder, in any shapes into which they can be put. What a pity it is, that the progress of experimental philosophy should be checked by his Grace's monopoly! Such are their sentiments, I assure him; such is their language when they dare to speak; and such are their proceedings, when they have the means to act.

Their geographers, and geometricians, have been some time out of practice. It is some time since they have divided their own country into squares. That figure has lost the charms of its novelty. They want new lands for new trials. It is not only the geometricians of the republick that find him a good subject, the chymists have bespoke him after the geometricians have done with him. As the first set have an eye on his Grace's lands, the chymists are not less taken with his buildings. They consider mortar as a very anti-revolutionary invention in its present state; but properly employed, an admirable material for overturning all establishments. They have found that the gunpowder of *ruins* is far the fittest for making other *ruins*, and so *ad infinitum*. They have calculated what quantity of matter convertible into nitre is to be found in Bedford house, in Wooburn Abbey,

and

and in what his Grace and his trustees have still suffered to stand of that foolish royalist Inigo Jones, in Covent Garden. Churches, play-houses, coffee-houses, all alike are destined to be mingled, and equalised, and blended into on ecommon rubbish; and well-sifted, and lixiviated, to crystallize into true democratick explosive insurrectionary nitre. Their academy del *Cimento* (per antiphrasin) with Morveau and Hassenfrats at its head, have computed that the brave sans-culottes may make war on all the aristocracy of Europe for a twelvemonth, out of the rubbish of the duke of Bedford's buildings *.

* There is nothing, on which the leaders of the republick, one and indivisible, value themselves, more than on the chymical operations, by which, through science, they convert the pride of aristocracy to an instrument of its own destruction—on the operation by which they reduce the magnificent ancient country seats of the nobility, decorated with the *feudal* titles of Duke, Marquis, or Earl, into magazines of what they call *revolutionary* gunpowder. They tell us, that hitherto things "had not yet been properly and in a *revolutionary* manner explored."—"The strong *chateaus*, those *feudal* "fortresses, that *were ordered to be demolished*, attracted next "the attention of your committee. *Nature* there had *secretly* regained her *rights*, and had produced saltpetre for "the *purpose*, as it should seem, *of facilitating the execution* "*of your decree by preparing means of destruction*. From these "*ruins*, which *still frown* on the liberties of the republick, we "have extracted the means of producing good; and those piles, "which have hitherto glutted the *pride of despots*, and covered the plots of La Vendée, will soon furnish wherewithal to

"tame

While the Morveaux and Priestleys are proceeding with these experiments upon the duke of Bedford's houses, the Sieyes, and the rest of the analytical legislators, and constitution-venders, are quite as busy in their trade of decomposing organization, in forming his Grace's vassals into primary assemblies, national guards, first, second and third requisitioners, committees of research, conductors of the travelling guillotine, judges of revolutionary tribunals, legislative hangmen, supervisors of domiciliary visitation, exactors of forced loans, and assessors of the maximum.

The din of all this smithery may some time or other possibly wake this noble Duke, and push him to an endeavour to save some little matter from their experimental philosophy. If he pleads his grants from the crown, he is ruined at the outset. If he pleads he has received them from the pillage of superstitious corporations, this indeed will stagger them a little, because they are enemies to all corporations, and to all religion. However, they will soon recover themselves, and will tell his Grace or his learned council, that all such property

"tame the traitors, and to overwhelm the disaffected."——
"The *rebellious cities* also, have afforded a large quantity of
"saltpetre. *Commune Affranchie* (that is, the noble city of
"Lyons reduced in many parts to a heap of ruins,) and
"Toulon, will pay a *second* tribute to our artillery." Report 1st. February 1794.

belongs

belongs to the *nation;* and that it would be more wise for him, if he wishes to live the natural term of a *citizen*, (that is, according to Condorcet's calculation, six months on an average,) not to pass for an usurper upon the national property. This is what the *serjeants* at law of the rights of man, will say to the puny *apprentices* of the common law of England.

Is the genius of philosophy not yet known? You may as well think the garden of the Thuilleries was well protected with the cords of ribbon insultingly stretched by the national assembly to keep the sovereign canaille from intruding on the retirement of the poor king of the French, as that such flimsy cobwebs will stand between the savages of the revolution and their natural prey. Deep philosophers are no triflers; brave sans-culottes are no formalists. They will no more regard a Marquis of Tavistock than an Abbot of Tavistock; the Lord of Wooburn will not be more respectable in their eyes than the Prior of Wooburn; they will make no difference between the superior of a Covent Garden of nuns and of a Covent Garden of another description. They will not care a rush whether his coat is long or short; whether the colour be purple or blue and buff. They will not trouble *their* heads, with what part of *his* head, his hair is cut from; and they will look with equal respect on a tonsure and a crop. Their only question will

be

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] of the [illegible] upon [illegible] that we [illegible] at Charing-cross, alive as he is, and [illegible] in the world, he is divided into [illegible], and [illegible], and briskets, and into all sorts of pieces for roasting, boiling, and stewing, that all the while they are measuring *him*, his Grace is measuring me; is invidiously comparing the bounty of the crown with the deserts of the defender of his order, and in the same moment favoring on those who have the knife half out of the sheath—poor innocent!

Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,
And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.

No man lives too long, who lives to do with spirit, and suffer with resignation, what Providence pleases to command or inflict; but indeed they are sharp incommodities which beset old age. It was but the other day, that on putting in order some things which had been brought here on my taking leave of London for ever, I looked over a number of fine portraits, most of them of persons

now dead, but whose society, in my better days, made this a proud and happy place. Amongst these was the picture of Lord Keppel. It was painted by an artist worthy of the subject, the excellent friend of that excellent man from their earliest youth, and a common friend of us both, with whom we lived for many years without a moment of coldness, of peevishness, of jealousy, or of jar, to the day of our final separation.

I ever looked on Lord Keppel as one of the greatest and best men of his age; and I loved, and cultivated him accordingly. He was much in my heart, and, I believe I was in his to the very last beat. It was at his trial at Portsmouth that he gave me this picture. With what zeal and anxious affection I attended him through that his agony of glory, what part my son in the early flush and enthusiasm of his virtue, and the pious passion with which he attached himself to all my connections, with what prodigality we both squandered ourselves in courting almost every sort of enmity for his sake, I believe he felt, just as I should have felt, such friendship on such an occasion. I partook indeed of this honour, with several of the first, and best, and ablest in the kingdom, but I was behind hand with none of them; and I am sure, that if to the eternal disgrace of this nation, and to the total annihilation of every trace of honour and virtue in it, things had taken a different turn from

what

what they did, I should have attended him to the quarter-deck with no less good will and more pride, though with far other feelings, than I partook of the general flow of national joy that attended the justice that was done to his virtue.

Pardon, my Lord, the feeble garrulity of age, which loves to diffuse itself in discourse of the departed great. At my years we live in retrospect alone: and, wholly unfitted for the society of vigorous life, we enjoy, the best balm to all wounds, the consolation of friendship, in those only whom we have lost for ever. Feeling the loss of Lord Keppel at all times, at no time did I feel it so much as on the first day when I was attacked in the house of lords.

Had he lived, that reverend form would have risen in its place, and with a mild, parental reprehension to his nephew the duke of Bedford, he would have told him that the favour of that gracious Prince, who had honoured his virtues with the government of the navy of Great Britain, and with a seat in the hereditary great council of his kingdom, was not undeservedly shewn to the friend of the best portion of his life, and his faithful companion and counsellor under his rudest trials. He would have told him, that to whomever else these reproaches might be becoming, they were not decorous in his near kindred. He would

have told him that when men in that rank lose decorum, they lose every thing.

On that day I had a loss in Lord Keppel; but the public loss of him in this awful crisis—! I speak from much knowledge of the person, he never would have listened to any compromise with the rabble rout of this sans culotterie of France. His goodness of heart, his reason, his taste, his publick duty, his principles, his prejudices, would have repelled him for ever from all connection with that horrid medley of madness, vice, impiety, and crime.

Lord Keppel had two countries; one of descent and one of birth. Their interest and their glory are the same; and his mind was capacious of both. His family was noble, and it was Dutch: that is, he was the oldest and purest nobility that Europe can boast, among a people renowned above all others for love of their native land. Though it was never shewn in insult to any human being, Lord Keppel was something high. It was a wild stock of pride, on which the tenderest of all hearts had grafted the milder virtues. He valued ancient nobility; and he was not disinclined to augment it with new honours. He valued the old nobility and the new, not as an excuse for inglorious sloth, but as an incitement to virtuous activity. He considered it as a sort of cure for selfishness and a nar-

row

row mind; conceiving that a man born in an elevated place, in himself was nothing, but every thing in what went before, and what was to come after him. Without much speculation, but by the sure instinct of ingenuous feelings, and by the dictates of plain unsophisticated natural understanding, he felt, that no great commonwealth could by any possibility long subsist, without a body of some kind or other of nobility, decorated with honour, and fortified by privilege. This nobility forms the chain that connects the ages of a nation, which otherwise (with Mr. Paine) would soon be taught that no one generation can bind another. He felt that no political fabrick could be well made without some such order of things as might, through a series of time, afford a rational hope of securing unity, coherence, consistency, and stability to the state. He felt that nothing else can protect it against the levity of courts, and the greater levity of the multitude. That to talk of hereditary monarchy, without any thing else of heretary reverence in the commonwealth was a low minded absurdity; fit only for those detestable "fools aspiring to be knaves," who began to forge in 1789, the false money of the French constitution—That it is one fatal objection to all *new* fancied and *new fabricated* republicks, (among a people, who, once possessing such an advantage, have wickedly and insolently rejected it,) that the

prejudice of an old nobility is a thing that *cannot* be made. It may be improved, it may be corrected, it may be replenished: men may be taken from it or aggregated to it, but the *thing itself* is matter of *inveterate* opinion, and therefore *cannot* be matter of mere positive institution. He felt, that this nobility, in fact does not exist in wrong of other orders of the state, but by them, and for them.

I knew the man I speak of; and, if we can divine the future, out of what we collect from the past, no person living would look with more scorn and horrour on the impious parricide committed on all their ancestry, and on the desperate attainder passed on all their posterity, by the Orleans, and the Rochefaucaults, and the Fayettes, and the Viscomtes de Noailles, and the false Perigords, and the long *et cætera* of the perfidious sans culottes of the court, who like demoniacks, possessed with a spirit of fallen pride, and inverted ambition, abdicated their dignities, disowned their families, betrayed the most sacred of all trusts, and by breaking to pieces a great link of society and all the cramps and holdings of the state, brought eternal confusion and desolation on their country. For the fate of the miscreant parricides themselves he would have had no pity. Compassion for the myriads of men, of whom the world was not worthy, who by their means have perished in prisons,

or

or on scaffolds, or are pining in beggary and exile, would leave no room in his, or in any well-formed mind, for any such sensation. We are not made at once to pity the oppressor and the oppressed.

Looking to his Batavian descent, how could he bear to behold his kindred, the descendants of the brave nobility of Holland, whose blood prodigally poured out, had, more than all the canals, meers, and inundations of their country, protected their independence, to behold them bowed in the basest servitude, to the basest and vilest of the human race; in servitude to those who in no respect were superiour in dignity, or could aspire to a better place than that of hangmen to the tyrants, to whose sceptered pride they had opposed an elevation of soul, that surmounted, and overpowered the loftiness of Castile, the haughtiness of Austria, and the overbearing arrogance of France?

Could he with patience bear, that the children of that nobility, who would have deluged their country and given it to the sea, rather than submit to Louis XIV. who was then in his meridian glory, when his arms were conducted by the Turennes, by the Luxembourgs, by the Boufflers; when his councils were directed by the Colberts, and the Louvois; when his tribunals were filled by the Lamoignons and the Daguessaus—that these should be given up to the cruel sport of the Pichegru's,

the Jourdans, the Santerres, under the Rolands, and Brissots, and Gorfas, and Robespierres, the Reubels, the Carnots, and Talliens, and Dantons, and the whole tribe of regicides, robbers, and revolutionary judges, that from the rotten carcase of their own murdered country, have poured out innumerable swarms of the lowest, and at once the most destructive of the classes of animated nature, which, like columns of locusts, have laid waste the fairest part of the world?

Would Keppel have borne to see the ruin of the virtuous patricians, that happy union of the noble and the burgher, who with signal prudence and integrity, had long governed the cities of the confederate republick, the cherishing fathers of their country, who, denying commerce to themselves, made it flourish in a manner unexampled under their protection? Could Keppel have borne that a vile faction should totally destroy this harmonious construction, in favour of robbing a democracy, founded on the spurious rights of man?

He was no great clerk, but he was perfectly well versed in the interests of Europe, and he could not have heard with patience, that the country of Grotius, the cradle of the law of nations, and one of the richest repositories of all law, should be taught a new code by the ignorant flippancy of Thomas Paine, the presumptuous foppery of La Fayette, with his stolen rights of man in his hand,

the wild profligate intrigue and turbulency of Marat, and the impious sophistry of Condorcet, in his insolent addresses to the Batavian republick?

Could Keppel, who idolized the house of Nassau, who was himself given to England, along with the blessings of the British and Dutch revolutions; with revolutions of stability; with revolutions which consolidated and married the liberties and the interests of the two nations for ever, could he see the fountain of British liberty itself in servitude to France? Could he see with patience a prince of Orange expelled as a sort of diminutive despot, with every kind of contumely, from the country, which that family of deliverers had so often rescued from slavery, and obliged to live in exile in another country, which owes its liberty to his house?

Would Keppel have heard with patience, that the conduct he held on such occasions was to become short by the knees to the faction of the homicides, to intreat them quietly to retire? or if the fortune of war should drive them from their first wicked and unprovoked invasion, that no security should be seen, no arrangement made, no barrier formed, no [illegible] for the security of [illegible] the most [illegible] he have [illegible]

Austrian Netherlands (which ought to be a barrier to Holland, and the tie of an alliance, to protect her against any species of rule that might be erected, or even be restored in France) should be formed into a republick under her influence, and dependent upon her power?

But above all, what would he have said, if he had heard it made a matter of accusation against me, by his nephew the duke of Bedford, that I was the author of the war? Had I a mind to keep that high distinction to myself, as from pride I might, but from justice I dare not, he would have snatched his share of it from my hand, and held it with the grasp of a dying convulsion to his end.

It would be a most arrogant presumption in me to assume to myself the glory of what belongs to his majesty, and to his ministers, and to his parliament, and to the far greater majority of his faithful people: But had I stood alone to counsel, and that all were determined to be guided by my advice, and to follow it implicitly—then I should have been the sole author of a war. But it should have been a war on my ideas and my principles. However, let his Grace think as he may of my demerits with regard to the war with regicide, he will find my guilt confined to that alone. He never shall, with the smallest colour of reason, accuse me of being the author of a peace with

regicide,

regicide. But that is high matter; and ought not to be mixed with any thing of so little moment, as what may belong to me, or even to the duke of Bedford.

I have the honour to be, &c.

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER I.

ON THE

OVERTURES OF PEACE.

MY DEAR SIR,

OUR last conversation, though not in the tone of absolute despondency, was far from chearful. We could not easily account for some unpleasant appearances. They were represented to us as indicating the state of the popular mind; and they were not at all what we should have expected from our old ideas even of the faults and vices of the English character. The disastrous events, which have followed one upon another in a long unbroken funereal train, moving in a procession, that seemed to have no end, these were not the principal causes of our dejection. We feared more from what threatened to fail within, than what menaced to oppress us from abroad. To a people who have once been proud and great, and great because they were proud, a change in the national spirit is the most terrible of all revolutions.

I shall not live to behold the unravelling of the intricate plot, which saddens and perplexes the awful

MR. BURKE'S

THREE LETTERS

ADDRESSED TO

A MEMBER OF THE PRESENT PARLIAMENT;

ON THE

PROPOSALS FOR PEACE

WITH THE

REGICIDE DIRECTORY OF FRANCE.

1796.

LETTER I.

ON THE

OVERTURES OF PEACE.

MY DEAR SIR,

OUR last conversation, though not in the tone of absolute despondency, was far from chearful. We could not easily account for some unpleasant appearances. They were represented to us as indicating the state of the popular mind; and they were not at all what we should have expected from our old ideas even of the faults and vices of the English character. The disastrous events, which have followed one upon another in a long unbroken funereal train, moving in a procession, that seemed to have no end, these were not the principal causes of our dejection. We feared more from what threatened to fail within, than what menaced to oppress us from abroad. To a people who have once been proud and great, and great because they were proud, a change in the national spirit is the most terrible of all revolutions.

I shall not live to behold the unravelling of the intricate plot, which saddens and perplexes the

awful

awful drama of Providence, now acting on the moral theatre of the world. Whether for thought or for action, I am at the end of my career. You are in the middle of yours. In what part of its orbit the nation, with which we are carried along, moves at this instant, it is not easy to conjecture. It may, perhaps, be far advanced in its aphelion.—But when to return?

Not to lose ourselves in the infinite void of the conjectural world, our business is with what is likely to be affected for the better or the worse, by the wisdom or weakness of our plans. In all speculations upon men and human affairs, it is of no small moment to distinguish things of accident from permanent causes, and from effects that cannot be altered. It is not every irregularity in our movement that is a total deviation from our course. I am not quite of the mind of those speculators, who seem assured, that necessarily, and by the constitution of things, all states have the same periods of infancy, manhood, and decrepitude, that are found in the individuals who compose them. Parallels of this sort rather furnish similitudes to illustrate or to adorn, than supply analogies from whence to reason. The objects which are attempted to be forced into an analogy are not found in the same classes of existence. Individuals are physical being subject to laws universal and invariable. The immediate cause acting in these laws may be obscure:

obscure: the general results are subjects of certain calculation. But commonwealths are not physical but moral essences. They are artificial combinations; and in their proximate efficient cause, the arbitrary productions of the human mind. We are not yet acquainted with the laws which necessarily influence the stability of that kind of work made by that kind of agent. There is not in the physical order (with which they do not appear to hold any assignable connexion) a distinct cause by which any of those fabricks must necessarily grow, flourish, or decay; nor, in my opinion, does the moral world produce any thing more determinate on that subject, that what may serve as an amusement (liberal indeed, and ingenious, but still only an amusement) for speculative men. I doubt whether the history of mankind is yet complete enough, if ever it can be so, to furnish grounds for a sure theory on the internal causes which necessarily affect the fortune of a State. I am far from denying the operation of such causes: but they are infinitely uncertain, and much more obscure, and much more difficult to trace, than the foreign causes that tend to raise, to depress, and sometimes to overwhelm a community.

It is often impossible, in these political nonlifes, to find any proportion between the apparent force of any moral causes we may assign and their [illegible] operation. We are therefore obliged to [illegible]

[illegible]

that operation to mere chance, or more piously (perhaps more rationally) to the occasional interposition and irresistible hand of the Great Disposer. We have seen states of considerable duration, which for ages have remained nearly as they have begun, and could hardly be said to ebb or flow. Some appear to have spent their vigour at their commencement. Some have blazed out in their glory a little before their extinction. The meridian of some has been the most splendid. Others, and they the greatest number, have fluctuated, and experienced at different periods of their existence a great variety of fortune. At the very moment when some of them seemed plunged in unfathomable abysses of disgrace and disaster, they have suddenly emerged. They have begun a new course and opened a new reckoning; and even in the depths of their calamity, and on the very ruins of their country, have laid the foundations of a towering and durable greatness. All this has happened without any apparent previous change in the general circumstances which had brought on their distress. The death of a man at a critical juncture, his disgust, his retreat, his disgrace, have brought innumerable calamities on a whole nation. A common soldier, a child, a girl at the door of an inn, have changed the face of fortune, and almost of nature.

Such, and often influenced by such causes, has commonly

commonly been the fate of monarchies of long duration. They have their ebbs and their flows. This has been eminently the fate of the monarchy of France. There have been times in which no power has ever been brought so low. Few have ever flourished in greater glory. By turns elevated and depressed, that power had been, on the whole, rather on the increase; and it continued not only powerful but formidable to the hour of the total ruin of the monarchy. This fall of the monarchy was far from being preceded by any exterior symptoms of decline. The interiour were not visible to every eye; and a thousand accidents might have prevented the operation of what the most clear-sighted were not able to discern, nor the most provident to divine. A very little time before its dreadful catastrophe, there was a kind of exterior splendour in the situation of the crown, which usually adds to government strength and authority at home. The crown seemed then to have obtained some of the most splendid objects of state ambition. None of the continental powers of Europe were the enemies of France. They were all, either tacitly disposed to her, or publickly connected with her; and in those who kept the most aloof, there was little appearance of jealousy; of animosity there was no appearance at all. The British nation, her great preponderating rival, she had humbled; to all appearance she had weakened; certainly had

endangered, by cutting off a very large, and by far the most growing part of her empire. In that its acmé of human prosperity and greatness, in the high and palmy state of the monarchy of France, it fell to the ground without a struggle. It fell without any of those vices in the monarch, which have sometimes been the causes of the fall of kingdoms, but which existed, without any visible effect on the state, in the highest degree in many other princes; and, far from destroying their power, had only left some slight stains on their character. The financial difficulties were only pretexts and instruments of those who accomplish the ruin of that monarchy. They were not the causes of it.

Deprived of the old government, deprived in a manner of all government, France fallen as a monarchy, to common speculators might have appeared more likely to be an object of pity or insult, according to the disposition of the circumjacent powers, than to be the scourge and terrour of them all: but out of the tomb of the murdered monarchy in France, has arisen a vast, tremendous, unformed spectre, in a far more terrifick guise than any which ever yet have overpowered the imagination, and subdued the fortitude of man. Going straight forward to its end, unappalled by peril, unchecked by remorse, despising all common maxims and all common means, that hideous phantom overpowered those who could not believe it was possible

she

she could at all exist, except on the principles, which habit rather than nature had persuaded them were necessary to their own particular welfare and to their own ordinary modes of action. But the constitution of any political being, as well as that of any physical being, ought to be known, before one can venture to say what is fit for its conservation, or what is the proper means of its power. The poison of other states is the food of the new republick. That bankruptcy the very apprehension of which is one of the causes assigned for the fall of the monarchy, was the capital on which she opened her traffick with the world.

The republick of regicide with an annihilated revenue, with defaced manufactures, with a ruined commerce, with an uncultivated and half-depopulated country, with a discontented, distressed, enslaved, and famished people, passing with a rapid eccentrick, incalculable course, from the wildest anarchy to the sternest despotism, has actually conquered the finest parts of Europe, has distressed, disunited, deranged, and broke to pieces all the rest; and so subdued the minds of the rulers in every nation, that hardly any resource presents itself to them, except that of entitling themselves to a contemptuous mercy by a display of their imbecility and meanness. Even in their greatest military efforts and the greatest display of their fortitude, they seem not to hope, they do not even appear to

wish, the extinction of what subsists to their certain ruin. Their ambition is only to be admitted to a more favoured class in the order of servitude under that domineering power.

This seems the temper of the day. At first the French force was too much despised. Now it is too much dreaded. As inconsiderate courage has given way to irrational fear, so it may be hoped, that through the medium of deliberate sober apprehension, we may arrive at steady fortitude. Who knows whether indignation may not succeed to terrour, and the revival of high sentiment, spurning away the delusion of a safety purchased at the expence of glory, may not yet drive us to that generous despair, which has often subdued distempers in the state for which no remedy could be found in the wisest councils.

Other great states, having been without any regular certain course of elevation, or decline, we may hope that the British fortune may fluctuate also; because the publick mind, which greatly influences that fortune, may have its changes. We are therefore never authorized to abandon our country to its fate, or to act or advise as if it had no resource. There is no reason to apprehend, because ordinary means threaten to fail, that no others can spring up. Whilst our heart is whole, it will find means, or make them. The heart of the citizen is a perennial spring of energy to the state.

state. Because the pulse seems to intermit, we must not presume that it will cease instantly to beat. The publick must never be regarded as incurable. I remember in the beginning of what has lately been called the seven years war, that an eloquent writer and ingenious speculator, Dr. Brown, upon some reverses which happened in the beginning of that war, published an elaborate philosophical discourse to prove that the distinguishing features of the people of England have been totally changed, and that a frivolous effeminacy was become the national character. Nothing could be more popular than that work. It was thought a great consolation to us the light people of this country (who were and are light, but who were not and are not effeminate) that we had found the causes of our misfortunes in our vices. Pythagoras could not be more pleased with his leading discovery. But whilst in that splenetick mood we amused ourselves in a sour critical speculation, of which we were ourselves the objects, and in which every man lost his particular sense of the publick disgrace in the epidemick nature of the distemper; whilst, as in the Alps *Goitre* kept *Goitre* in countenance; whilst we were thus abandoning ourselves to a direct confession of our inferiority to France, and whilst many, very many, were ready to act upon a sense of that inferiority, a few months effected a total change in our variable minds. We emerged

from

from the gulph of that speculative despondency; and were buoyed up to the highest point of practical vigour. Never did the masculine spirit of England display itself with more energy, nor ever did its genius soar with a prouder pre-eminence over France, than at the time when frivolity and effeminacy had been at least tacitly acknowledged as their national character, by the good people of this kingdom.

For one (if they be properly treated) I despair neither of the publick fortune nor of the publick mind. There is much to be done undoubtedly, and much to be retrieved. We must walk in new ways, or we can never encounter our enemy in his devious march. We are not at an end of our struggle nor near it. Let us not deceive ourselves: we are at the beginning of great troubles. I readily acknowledge that the state of publick affairs is infinitely more unpromising than at the period I have just now alluded to, and the position of all the powers of Europe, in relation to us, and in relation to each other, is more intricate and critical beyond all comparison. Difficult indeed is our situation. In all situations of difficulty men will be influenced in the part they take, not only by the reason of the case, but by the peculiar turn of their own character. The same ways to safety do not present themselves to all men, nor to the same men in different tempers. There is a courageous wisdom; there

there is also a false reptile prudence, the result not of caution but of fear. Under misfortunes it often happens that the nerves of the understanding are so relaxed, the pressing peril of the hour so completely confounds all the faculties, that no future danger can be properly provided for, can be justly estimated, can be so much as fully seen. The eye of the mind is dazzled and vanquished. An abject distrust of ourselves, an extravagant admiration of the enemy, present us with no hope but in a compromise with his pride, by a submission to his will. This short plan of policy is the only counsel which will obtain a hearing. We plunge into a dark gulph with all the rash precipitation of fear. The nature of courage is, without a question, to be conversant with danger; but in the palpable night of their terrours, men under consternation suppose, not that it is the danger, which, by a sure instinct, calls out the courage to resist it, but that it is the courage which produces the danger. They therefore seek for a refuge from their fears in the fears themselves, and consider a temporizing meanness as the only source of safety.

The rules and definitions of prudence can rarely be exact; never universal. I do not deny that in small truckling states a timely compromise with power has often been the means, and the only means, of drawling out their puny existence; but a great state is too much envied, too much dreaded

to

to find safety in humiliation. To be secure, it must be respected. Power, and eminence, and consideration, are things not to be begged. They must be commanded: and they who supplicate for mercy from others, can never hope for justice through themselves. What justice they are to obtain, as the alms of an enemy, depends upon his character; and that they ought well to know before they implicitly confide.

Much controversy there has been in Parliament, and not a little amongst us out of doors, about the instrumental means of this nation towards the maintenance of her dignity, and the assertion of her rights. On the most elaborate and correct detail of facts, the result seems to be, that at no time has the wealth and power of Great Britain been so considerable as it is at this very perilous moment. We have a vast interest to preserve, and we possess great means of preserving it; but it is to be remembered that the artificer may be incumbered by his tools, and that resources may be among impediments. If wealth is the obedient and labourious slave of virtue and of publick honour, then wealth is in its place, and has its use: but if this order is changed, and honour is to be sacrificed to the conservation of riches, riches which have neither eyes nor hands, nor any thing truly vital in them, cannot long survive the being of their vivifying powers, their legitimate masters, and their potent protectors.

If

If we command our wealth, we shall be rich and free: if our wealth commands us, we are poor indeed. We are bought by the enemy with the treasure from our own coffers. Too great a sense of the value of a subordinate interest may be the very source of its danger, as well as the certain ruin of interests of a superiour order. Often has a man lost his all because he would not submit to hazard all in defending it. A display of our wealth before robbers is not the way to restrain their boldness, or to lessen their rapacity. This display is made, I know, to persuade the people of England that thereby we shall awe the enemy, and improve the terms of our capitulation: it is made, not that we should fight with more animation, but that we should supplicate with better hopes. We are mistaken. We have an enemy to deal with who never regarded our contest as a measuring and weighing of purses. He is the Gaul that puts his *sword* into the scale. He is more tempted with our wealth as booty, than terrified with it as power. But let us be rich or poor, let us be either in what proportion we may, nature is false or this is true, that where the essential publick force (of which money is but a part) is in any degree upon a par in a conflict between nations, that state which is resolved to hazard its existence rather than to abandon its objects, must have an infinite advantage over that which is resolved to yield rather than to

carry

carry its resistance beyond a certain point. Humanly speaking, that people which bounds its efforts only with its being, must give the law to that nation which will not push its opposition beyond its convenience.

If we look to nothing but our domestick condition, the state of the nation is full even to plethory; but if we imagine that this country can long maintain its blood and its food, as disjoined from the community of mankind, such an opinion does not deserve refutation as absurd, but pity as insane.

I do not know that such an improvident and stupid selfishness deserves the discussion, which perhaps, I may bestow upon it hereafter. We cannot arrange with our enemy in the present conjuncture, without abandoning the interest of mankind. If we look only to our own petty peculium in the war, we have had some advantages; advantages ambiguous in their nature, and dearly bought. We have not in the slightest degree impaired the strength of the common enemy in any one of those points in which his particular force consists; at the same time that new enemies to ourselves, new allies to the regicide republick, have been made out of the wrecks and fragments of the general confederacy. So far as to the selfish part. As composing a part of the community of Europe, and interested in its fate, it is not easy to conceive a state of things more doubtful and perplexing.

When

When Louis the XIVth had made himself master of one of the largest and most important provinces of Spain; when he had in a manner overrun Lombardy, and was thundering at the gates of Turin; when he had mastered almost all Germany on this side the Rhine; when he was on the point of ruining the august fabrick of the empire; when with the elector of Bavaria in his alliance, hardly any thing interposed between him and Vienna; when the Turk hung with a mighty force over the empire on the other side; I do not know, that in the beginning of 1704 (that is in the third year of the renovated war with Louis the XIVth) the state of Europe was so truly alarming. To England it certainly was not. Holland (and Holland is a matter to England of value inestimable) was then powerful, was then independent, and though greatly endangered, was then full of energy and spirit. But the great resource of Europe was in England: not in a sort of England detached from the rest of the world, and amusing herself with the puppet-shew of a naval power, (it can be no better, whilst all the sources of that power, and of every sort of power, are precarious) but in that sort of England, who considered herself as embodied with Europe; but in that sort of England, who, sympathetick with the adversity or the happiness of mankind, felt that nothing in human affairs was foreign to her. We may consider it as a sure axiom that, as on the one hand

hand no confederacy of the least effect or duration can exist against France, of which England is not only a part, but the head, so neither can England pretend to cope with France but as connected with the body of Christendom.

Our account of the war, *as a war of communion*, to the very point in which we began to throw out lures, oglings, and glances for peace, was a war of disaster and of little else. The independent advantages obtained by us at the beginning of the war, and which were made at the expence of that common cause, if they deceive us about our largest and our surest interest, are to be reckoned amongst our heaviest losses.

The allies, and Great Britain amongst the rest, (and perhaps among the foremost) have been miserably deluded by this great fundamental errour; that it was in our power to make peace with this monster of a state, whenever we chose to forget the crimes that made it great, and the designs that made it formidable. People imagined that their ceasing to resist was the sure way to be secure. This "pale cast of thought" sicklied over all their enterprises and turned all their politicks awry. They could not, or rather they would not read, in the most unequivocal declarations of the enemy and in his uniform conduct, that more safety was to be found in the most arduous war, than in the friendship of that kind of being. Its hostile amity

can

can be obtained on no terms that do not imply an inability hereafter to resist its designs. This great prolifick errour (I mean that peace was always in our power) has been the cause that rendered the allies indifferent about the *direction* of the war; and persuaded them that they might always risk a choice, and even a change in its objects. They seldom improved any advantage: hoping that the enemy, affected by it, would make a proffer of peace. Hence it was, that all their early victories have been followed almost immediately with the usual effects of a defeat; whilst all the advantages obtained by the regicides, have been followed by the consequences that were natural. The discomfitures, which the republick of assassins has suffered, have uniformly called forth new exertions, which not only repaired old losses, but prepared new conquests. The losses of the allies, on the contrary, (no provision having been made on the speculation of such an event) have been followed by desertion, by dismay, by disunion, by a dereliction of their policy, by a flight from their principles, by an admiration of the enemy, by mutual accusations, by a distrust in every member of the alliance of its fellow, of its cause, its power, and its courage.

Great difficulties in consequence of our erroneous policy, as I have said, press upon every side of us. Far from desiring to conceal or even to palliate

the

the evil in the representation, I wish to lay it down as my foundation, that never greater existed. In a moment when sudden panick is apprehended, it may be wise, for a while to conceal some great publick disaster, or to reveal it by degrees, until the minds of the people have time to be recollected, that their understanding may have leisure to rally, and that more steady councils may prevent their doing something desperate under the first impressions of rage or terrour. But with regard to a *general* state of things, growing out of events and causes already known in the gross, there is no piety in the fraud that covers its true nature; because nothing but erroneous resolutions can be the result of false representations. Those measures which in common distress might be available, in greater, are no better than playing with the evil. That the effort may bear a proportion to the exigence, it is fit it should be known; known in its quality, in its extent, and in all the circumstances which attend it. Great reverses of fortune there have been, and great embarrassments in council: a principled regicide enemy possessed of the most important part of Europe, and struggling for the rest: within ourselves a total relaxation of all authority, whilst a cry is raised against it, as if it were the most ferocious of all despotism. A worse phænomenon;—our government disowned by the most efficient member of its tribunals; ill supported by any of

their constituent parts; and the highest tribunal of all (from causes not for our present purpose to examine) deprived of all that dignity and all that efficiency which might enforce, or regulate, or if the case required it, might supply the want of every other court. Publick prosecutions are become little better than schools for treason; of no use but to improve the dexterity of criminals in the mystery of evasion; or to shew with what complete impunity men may conspire against the commonwealth; with what safety assassins may attempt its awful head. Every thing is secure, except what the laws have made sacred; every thing is tameness and languor that is not fury and faction. Whilst the distempers of a relaxed fibre prognosticate and prepare all the morbid force of convulsion in the body of the state, the steadiness of the physician is overpowered by the very aspect of the disease *. The doctor of the constitution, pretending to underrate what he is not able to contend with, shrinks from his own operation. He doubts and questions the salutary but critical terrours of the cautery and the knife. He takes a poor credit even from his defeat; and covers impotence under the mask of lenity. He praises the moderation of the laws, as, in his hands, he sees them baffled and despised. Is all this, because in our day the statutes of the

* "Mussabat tacito medicina timore."

kingdom

kingdom are not engrossed in as firm a character, and imprinted in as black and legible a type as ever? No! the law is a clear, but it is a dead letter. Dead and putrid, it is insufficient to save the state, but potent to infect and to kill. Living law, full of reason, and of equity and justice, (as it is, or it should not exist) ought to be severe and awful too; or the words of menace, whether written on the parchment roll of England, or cut into the brazen tablet of Rome, will excite nothing but contempt. How comes it, that in all the state prosecutions of magnitude, from the revolution to within these two or three years, the crown has scarcely ever retired disgraced and defeated from its courts? Whence this alarming change? By a connection easily felt, and not impossible to be traced to its cause, all the parts of the state have their correspondence and consent. They who bow to the enemy abroad will not be of power to subdue the conspirator at home. It is impossible not to observe, that in proportion as we approximate to the poisonous jaws of anarchy, the fascination grows irresistible. In proportion as we are attracted towards the focus of illegality, irreligion, and desperate enterprise, all the venemous and blighting insects of the state are awakened into life. The promise of the year is blasted, and shrivelled, and burned up before them. Our most salutary and most beautiful institutions yield nothing but dust

and

and smut: the harvest of our law is no more than stubble. It is in the nature of these eruptive diseases in the state to sink in by fits and re-appear. But the fuel of the malady remains; and in my opinion is not in the smallest degree mitigated in its malignity, though it waits the favourable moment of a freer communication with the source of regicide to exert and to increase its force.

Is it that the people are changed, that the commonwealth cannot be protected by its laws? I hardly think it. On the contrary, I conceive, that these things happen because men are not changed, but remain always what they always were; they remain what the bulk of us ever must be, when abandoned to our vulgar propensities, without guide, leader, or controul: that is, made to be full of a blind elevation in prosperity; to despise untried dangers; to be overpowered with unexpected reverses; to find no clue in a labyrinth of difficulties, to get out of a present inconvenience with any risk of future ruin; to follow and to bow to fortune; to admire successful though wicked enterprise, and to imitate what we admire; to condemn the government which announces danger from anything and regicide, whilst they are only in their infancy and their struggle, but which finds nothing that can alarm in their adult state and in the power and triumph of those destructive principles. In a word

we cannot be left to ourselves. We must have leaders. If none will undertake to lead us right, we shall find guides who will contrive to conduct us to shame and ruin.

We are in a war of a *peculiar* nature. It is not with an ordinary community, which is hostile or friendly as passion or as interest may veer about: not with a State which makes war through wantonness, and abandons it through lassitude. We are at war with a system, which, by its essence, is inimical to all other Governments, and which makes peace or war, as peace and war may best contribute to their subversion. It is with an *armed doctrine*, that we are at war. It has, by its essence, a faction of opinion, and of interest, and of enthusiasm, in every country. To us it is a Colossus which bestrides our channel. It has one foot on a foreign shore, the other upon the British soil. Thus advantaged, if it can at all exist, it must finally prevail. Nothing can so completely ruin any of the old Governments, ours in particular, as the acknowledgment, directly, or by implication, of any kind of superiority in this new power. This acknowledgment we make, if in a bad or doubtful situation of our affairs, we solicit peace; or if we yield to the modes of new humiliation, in which alone she is content to give us an hearing. By that means the terms cannot be of our choosing; no, not in any part.

It

It is laid in the unalterable constitution of things:—None can aspire to act greatly, but those who are of force greatly to suffer. They who made their arrangements in the first run of misadventure, and in a temper of mind the common fruit of disappointment and dismay, put a seal on their calamities. To their power they take a security against any favours which they might hope from the usual inconstancy of fortune. I am therefore, my dear friend, invariably of your opinion (though full of respect for those who think differently) that neither the time chosen for it, nor the manner of solicitating a negociation, were properly considered; even though I had allowed (I hardly shall allow) that with the horde of regicides we could by any selection of time, or use of means, obtain any thing at all deserving the name of peace.

In one point we are lucky. The regicide has received our advances with scorn. We have an enemy, to whose virtues we can owe nothing; but on this occasion we are infinitely obliged to one of his vices. We owe more to his insolence than to our own precaution. The haughtiness by which the proud repel us, has this of good in it; that in making us keep our distance, they must keep their distance too. In the present case, the pride of the regicide may be our safety. He has given time for our reason to operate; and for British dignity to recover from its surprise. From first to last he

has rejected all our advances. Far as we have gone he has still left a way open to our retreat.

There is always an augury to be taken of what a peace is likely to be, from the preliminary steps that are made to bring it about. We may gather something from the time in which the first overtures are made; from the quarter whence they come; from the manner in which they are received. These discover the temper of the parties. If your enemy offers peace in the moment of success, it indicates that he is satisfied with something. It shews that there are limits to his ambition or his resentment. If he offers nothing under misfortune, it is probable, that it is more painful to him to abandon the prospect of advantage than to endure calamity. If he rejects solicitation, and will not give even a nod to the suppliants for peace, until a change in the fortune of the war threatens him with ruin, then I think it evident, that he wishes nothing more than to disarm his adversary to gain time. Afterwards a question arises, which of the parties is likely to obtain the greater advantages, by continuing disarmed and by the use of time.

With these few plain indications in our minds, it will not be improper to re-consider the conduct of the enemy together with our own, from the day that a question of peace has been in agitation. In considering this part of the question, I do not proceed on my own hypothesis. I suppose, for a

moment,

moment, that this body of regicide, calling itself a republick, is a politick person, with whom something deserving the name of peace may be made. On that supposition, let us examine our own proceeding. Let us compute the profit it has brought, and the advantage that it is likely to bring hereafter. A peace too eagerly sought, is not always the sooner obtained. The discovery of vehement wishes generally frustrates their attainment; and your adversary has gained a great advantage over you when he finds you impatient to conclude a treaty. There is in reserve, not only something of dignity, but a great deal of prudence too. A sort of courage belongs to negotiation as well as to operations of the field. A negotiator must often seem willing to hazard the whole issue of his treaty, if he wishes to secure any one material point.

The regicides were the first to declare war. We are the first to sue for peace. In proportion to the humility and perseverance we have shewn in our addresses, has been the obstinacy of their arrogance in rejecting our suit. The patience of their pride seems to have been worn out with the importunity of our courtship. Disgusted as they are with a conduct so different from all the sentiments by which they are themselves filled, they think to put an end to our vexatious solicitation by redoubling their insults.

with the regicides nothing was thought of but to follow where it led; and it led to every thing. Not so much as a talk of treaty. Laws were laid down with arrogance. The most moderate politician in their clan * was chosen as the organ, not so much for prescribing limits to their claims, as to mark what, for the present, they are content to leave to others. They made, not laws, not conventions, not late possession, but physical nature, and political convenience, the sole foundation of their claims. The Rhine, the Mediterranean, and the ocean were the bounds which, for the time, they assigned to the empire of regicide. What was the chamber of union of Louis the Fourteenth, which astonished and provoked all Europe, compared to this declaration? In truth, with these limits, and their principle, they would not have left even the shadow of liberty or safety to any nation. This plan of empire was not taken up in the first intoxication of unexpected success. You must recollect, that it was projected, just as the report has stated it, from the very first revolt of the faction against their monarchy; and it has been uniformly pursued, as a standing maxim of national policy, from that time to this. It is, generally, in the season of prosperity that men discover their real temper, principles, and designs. But this principle suggested in their first struggles, fully avowed in their

* Boissy d' Anglas.

prosperity,

prosperity, has, in the most adverse state of their affairs, been tenaciously adhered to. The report, combined with their conduct, forms an infallible criterion of the views of this republic.

In their fortune there has been some fluctuation. We are to see how their minds have been affected with a change. Some impression it made on them undoubtedly. It produced some oblique notice of the submissions that were made by suppliant nations. The utmost they did, was to make some of those cold, formal, general professions of a love of peace which no Power has ever refused to make; because they mean little, and cost nothing. The first paper I have seen (the publication at Hamburgh) making a shew of that pacifick disposition, discovered a rooted animosity against this nation, and an incurable rancour, even more than any one of their hostile acts. In this Hamburgh declaration, they choose to suppose, that the war, on the part of England, *is a war of government, begun and carried on against the sense and interests of the people;* thus sowing in their very overtures towards peace, the seeds of tumult and sedition: for they never have abandoned, and never will they abandon, in peace, in war, in treaty, in any situation, or for one instant, their old steady maxim of separating the people from their Government. Let me add—and it is with unfeigned anxiety for the character and credit of ministers

ministers that I do add—if our government perseveres, in its as uniform course, of acting under instruments with such preambles, it pleads guilty to the charges made by our enemies against it, both on its own part, and on the part of parliament itself. The enemy must succeed in his plan for loosening and disconnecting all the internal holdings of the kingdom.

It was not enough, that the speech from the Throne in the opening of the session in 1795, threw out oglings and glances of tenderness. Lest this coquetting should seem too cold and ambiguous, without waiting for its effect, the violent passion for a relation to the regicides, produced a direct message from the crown, and its consequences from the two Houses of parliament. On the part of the regicides these declarations could not be entirely passed by without notice; but in that notice they discovered still more clearly the bottom of their character. The offer made to them by the message to Parliament was hinted at in their answer; but in an obscure and oblique manner as before. They accompanied their notice of the indications manifested on our side, with every kind of insolent and taunting reflection. The regicide directory, on the day which, in their gipsey jargon, they call the 5th of Pluviose, in return for our advances, charge us with eluding our declarations under "evasive formalities

" and

"and frivolous pretexts." What these pretexts and evasions were, they do not say, and I have never heard. But they do not rest there. They proceed to charge us, and, as it should seem, our allies in the mass, with direct *perfidy*; they are so conciliatory in their language as to hint that this perfidious character is not new in our proceedings. However, notwithstanding this our habitual perfidy, they will offer peace "on conditions *as moderate*" —as what? as reason and as equity require? No! as moderate "as are suitable to their *national dignity*." National dignity in all treaties I do admit is an *important consideration*. They have given us an useful *hint on that subject*; but dignity, hitherto, has belonged to the *mode of* proceeding, not to the matter of a treaty. Never before has it been mentioned as the *standard for* rating the conditions of peace; no, *never by the* most violent of conquerors. Indemnification is capable of some estimate; dignity has no standard. It is impossible to guess what acquisitions pride and ambition may think fit for their *dignity*. But lest any doubt should remain on what they think for their dignity, the regicides in the next paragraph tell us "that they will have no peace with their "enemies, until they have reduced them to a "state, which will put them under an *impossibility* "of pursuing their wretched projects:" that is, in plain French or English, until they have accomplished

plished our utter and irretrievable ruin. This is their *pacifick language*. It flows from their unalterable principle in whatever language they speak, or whatever steps they take, whether of real war, or of pretended pacification. They have never, to do them justice, been at much trouble in concealing their intentions. We were as obstinately resolved to think them not in earnest: but I confess jests of this sort, whatever their urbanity may be, are not much to my taste.

To this conciliatory and amicable publick communication, our sole answer, in effect is this—"Citizen regicides! whenever *you* find yourselves "in the humour, you may have a peace with *us*. "That is a point you may always command. We "are constantly in attendance, and nothing you "can do shall hinder us from the renewal of our "supplications. You may turn us out at the door; "but we will jump in at the window."

To those who do not love to contemplate the fall of human greatness, I do not know a more mortifying, spectacle, than to see the assembled majesty of the crowned heads of Europe waiting as patient suitors in the anti-chamber of regicide. They wait, it seems, until the sanguinary tyrant *Carnot*, shall have snorted away the fumes of the indigested blood of his sovereign. Then, when sunk on the down of usurped pomp, he shall have sufficiently indulged his meditations with what monarch

monarch he shall next glut his ravening maw, he may condescend to signify that it is his pleasure to be awake; and that he is at leisure to receive the proposals of his high and mighty clients for the terms on which he may respite the execution of the sentence he has passed upon them. At the opening of those doors, what a sight it must be to behold the plenipotentaries of royal impotence, in the precedency which they will intrigue to obtain, and which will be granted to them according to the seniority of their degradation, sneaking into the regicide presence, and with the relicks of the smile, which they had dressed up for the levee of their masters, still flickering on their curled lips, presenting the faded remains of their courtly graces, to meet the scornful, ferocious, sardonick grin of a bloody ruffian, who, whilst he is receiving their homage, is measuring them with his eye, and fitting to their size the slider of his guillotine! These ambassadors may easily return as good courtiers as they went; but can they ever return from that degrading residence, loyal and faithful subjects; or with any true affection to their master, or true attachment to the constitution, religion, or laws of their country? There is great danger that they who enter smiling into this Triphonian cave, will come out of it sad and serious conspirators; and such will continue as long as they live. They will become true conductors of contagion to every country,

out at random, and sown, as it were, broad cast, were never to be found in the mode of our proceeding with France and Spain, whilst the great monarchies of France and Spain existed. I do not say, that a diplomatick measure ought to be, like a parliamentary or a judicial proceeding, according to strict precedent. I hope I am far from that pedantry: But this I know, that a great state ought to have some regard to its ancient maxims: especially where they indicate its dignity; where they concur with the rules of prudence; and above all, where the circumstances of the time require that a spirit of innovation should be resisted, which leads to the humiliation of sovereign powers. It would be ridiculous to assert, that those powers have suffered nothing in their estimation. I admit that the great interests of a state will for a moment supersede all other considerations: but if there was a rule that a sovereign never should let down his dignity without a sure payment to his interest, the dignity of Kings would be held high enough. At present, however, fashion governs in more serious things than furniture and dress. It looks as if sovereigns abroad were emulous in bidding against their estimation. It seems as if the preeminence of regicide was acknowledged; and that kings tacitly ranked themselves below their sacrilegious murderers, as natural magistrates and judges over them. It appears as if dignity were the prerogative

prerogative of crime; and a temporising humiliation the proper part for venerable authority. If the vilest of mankind are resolved to be the most wicked, they lose all the baseness of their origin, and take their place above kings. This example in foreign princes, I trust, will not spread. It is the concern of mankind, that the destruction of order should not be a claim to rank: that crimes should not be the only title to pre-eminence and honour.

At this second stage of humiliation, (I mean the insulting declaration in consequence of the message to both Houses of Parliament) it might not have been amiss to pause; and not to squander away the fund of submissions, until we knew what final purposes of publick interest they might answer. The policy of subjecting ourselves to further insults is not to me quite apparent. It was resolved, however, to hazard a third trial. Citizen Barthelemi had been established on the part of the new republick, at Basle; where, with his proconsulate of Switzerland and the adjacent parts of Germany, he was appointed as a sort of factor to deal in the degradation of the crowned heads of Europe. At Basle it was thought proper, in order to keep others, I suppose, in countenance, that Great Britain should appear at this market, and bid with the rest, for the mercy of the people-king.

On the 6th of March 1796, Mr. Wickham, in

consequence of authority, was desired to sound France on her disposition towards a general pacification; to know whether she would consent to send ministers to a congress at such a place as might be hereafter agreed upon; whether there would be a disposition to communicate the general grounds of a pacification such as France (the diplomatick name of the regicide power) would be willing to propose, as a foundation for a negotiation for peace with his majesty *and his allies*; or to suggest any other way of arriving at the same end of a general pacification; but he had no authority to enter into any negotiation or discussion with Citizen Barthelemi upon these subjects.

On the part of Great Britain this measure was a voluntary act, wholly uncalled for on the part of regicide. Suits of this sort are at least strong indications of a desire for accommodation. Any other body of men but the directory would be somewhat soothed with such advances. They could not however begin their answer, which was given without much delay, and communicated on the 28th of the same month, without a preamble of insult and reproach, "They doubt the sincerity of the pacifick intention of this court." She did not begin, say they, yet to "know her real in-"terests," "she did not seek peace *with good* "*faith*." This, or something to this effect, has been the constant preliminary observation, (now grown

into a sort of office-form) on all our overtures to this power: a perpetual charge on the British government of fraud, evasion, and habitual perfidy.

It might be asked, from whence did these opinions of our insincerity and ill faith arise? It was, because the British ministry (leaving to the directory however to propose a better mode) proposed a *congress* for the purpose of a general pacification, and this they said "would render negotiation endless." From hence they immediately inferred a fraudulent intention in the offer. Unquestionably their mode of giving the law would bring matters to a more speedy conclusion. As to any other method more agreeable to them than a congress, an alternative expressly proposed to them, they did not condescend to signify their pleasure.

This refusal of treating conjointly with the powers allied against this republick, furnishes matter for a great deal of serious reflection. They have hitherto constantly declined any other than a treaty with a single power. By thus dissociating every state from every other, like deer separated from the herd, each power is treated with, on the merit of his being a deserter from the common cause. In that light the regicide power finding each of them insulated and unprotected, with great facility gives the law to them all. By this system, for the present an incurable distrust is sown amongst confederates; and in future all alliance is

rendered impracticable. It is thus they have treated with Prussia, with Spain, with Sardinia, with Bavaria, with the Ecclesiastical State, with Saxony; and here we see them refuse to treat with Great Britain in any other mode. They must be worse than blind who do not see with what undeviating regularity of system, in this case and in all cases, they pursue their scheme for the utter destruction of every independent power; especially the smaller, who cannot find any refuge whatever but in some common cause.

Renewing their taunts and reflections, they tell Mr. Wickham, "that *their* policy has no guides "but openness and good faith, and that their "conduct shall be conformable to these princi-"ples." They say concerning their government, that "yielding to the ardent desire by which it is "animated to procure peace for the French re-"publick, and for all nations, it will not *fear to* "*declare itself openly*. Charged by the constitu-"tion with the execution of the *laws*, it cannot "*make* or *listen* to any proposal that would be "contrary to them. The constitutional act does "not permit it to consent to any alienation of that "which, according to the existing laws, consti-"tutes the territory of the republick."

"With respect to the countries *occupied by the* "*French armies and which have not been united to* "*France*, they, as well as other interests political

"and

" and commercial, may become the subject of a
" negotiation, which will present to the directory
" the means of proving how much it desires to at-
" tain speedily to a happy pacification. That the
" directory is ready to receive in this respect any
" overtures that shall be just, reasonable, and
" compatible *with the dignity of the republick.*"
On the head of what is *not* to be the subject of negotiation, the directory is clear and open. As to what may be a matter of treaty, all this open dealing is gone. She retires into her shell. There she expects overtures from *you*—and you are to guess what she shall judge just, reasonable, and above all, *compatible with her dignity.*

In the records of pride there does not exist so insulting a declaration. It is insolent in words, in manner, but in substance it is not only insulting but alarming. It is a specimen of what may be expected from the masters we are preparing for our humbled country. Their openness and candour consist in a direct avowal of their despotism and ambition. We know that their declared resolution had been to surrender no object belonging to France previous to the war. They had resolved, that the republick was entire, and must remain so. As to what she has conquered from the allies and united to the same indivisible body, it is of the same nature. That is, the allies are to give up whatever conquests they have made or may make

upon France, but all which she has violently ravished from her neighbours, and thought fit to appropriate, are not to become so much as objects of negotiation.

In this unity and indivisibility of profession are sunk ten immense and wealthy provinces, full of strong, flourishing and opulent cities, (the Austrian Netherlands,) the part of Europe the most necessary to preserve any communication between this kingdom and its natural allies, next to Holland the most interesting to this country, and without which Holland must virtually belong to France. Savoy and Nice, the keys of Italy, and the citadel in her hands to bridle Switzerland, are in that consolidation. The important territory of Liege is torn out of the heart of the empire. All these are integrant parts of the republic, not to be subject to any discussion, or to be purchased by any equivalent. Why? because there is a law which prevents it. What law? The law of nations? The acknowledged publick law of Europe? Treaties and conventions of parties? No! not a pretence of the kind. It is a declaration not made in consequence of any prescription on her side, not on any cession or dereliction, actual or tacit, of other powers. It is a declaration *pendente lite* in the middle of a war, one principal object of which was originally the defence, and has since been the recovery of these very countries.

This

This strange law is not made for a trivial object, not for a single port, or for a single fortress, but for a great kingdom; for the religion, the morals, the laws, the liberties, the lives and fortunes of millions of human creatures, who without their consent, or that of their lawful government, are, by an arbitrary act of this regicide and homicide government, which they call a law, incorporated into their tyranny.

In other words, their will is the law, not only at home, but as to the concerns of every nation. Who has made that law but the regicide republick itself, whose laws, like those of the Medes and Persians, they cannot alter or abrogate, or even so much as take into consideration? Without the least ceremony or compliment, they have sent out of the world whole sets of laws and lawgivers. They have swept away the very constitutions under which the legislators acted, and the laws were made. Even the fundamental sacred rights of man they have not scrupled to profane. They have set this holy code at nought with ignominy and scorn. Thus they treat all their domestick laws and constitutions, and even what they had considered as a law of Nature; but whatever they have put their seal on for the purposes of their ambition, and the ruin of their neighbours, this alone is invulnerable, impassable, immortal. Assuming to be masters of every thing human and divine, here, and

and here alone, it seems they are limited, "cooped and cabined in;" and this omnipotent legislature finds itself wholly without the power of exercising its favourite attribute, the love of peace. In other words, they are powerful to usurp, impotent to restore; and equally by their power and their impotence they aggrandize themselves, and weaken and impoverish you and all other nations.

Nothing can be more proper or more manly than the state publication called a *note* on this proceeding, dated Downing-street, the 10th of April, 1796. Only that it is better expressed, it perfectly agrees with the opinion I have taken the liberty of submitting to your consideration *. I place it below

* "This Court has seen, with regret, how far the tone and spirit of that answer, the nature and extent of the demands which it contains, and the manner of announcing them, are remote from any dispositions for peace.

"The inadmissible pretension is there avowed of appropriating to France all that the laws existing there may have comprised under the denomination of French territory. To a demand such as this, is added an express declaration that no proposal contrary to it will be made, or even listened to. And even this, under the pretence of an internal regulation, the provisions of which are wholly foreign to all other nations.

"While these dispositions shall be persisted in, nothing is left for the King, but to prosecute a war equally just and necessary.

"Whenever his enemies shall manifest more pacifick sentiments, his Majesty will, at all times, be eager to concur in them;

below at full length as my justification in thinking that this astonishing paper from the Directory is not only a direct negative to all treaty, but is a rejection of every principle upon which treaties could be made. To admit it for a moment were to erect this power, usurped at home, into a legislature to govern mankind. It is an authority that on a thousand occasions they have asserted in claim, and whenever they are able, exerted in practice. The dereliction of this whole scheme of policy became, therefore, an indispensable previous condition to all renewal of treaty. The remark of the British cabinet on this arrogant and tyrannical claim is natural and unavoidable. Our ministry state, "*That while these dispositions shall be persisted in, nothing is left for the King but to prosecute a war that is just and necessary.*"

It was of course, that we should wait until the enemy shewed some sort of disposition on his part to

them, by lending himself, in concert with his allies, to all such measures as shall be calculated to re-establish general tranquillity on conditions just, honourable and permanent, either by the establishment of a general congress, which has been so happily the means of restoring peace to Europe, or by a preliminary discussion of the principles which may be proposed, on either side, as a foundation of a general pacification; or, lastly, by an impartial examination of any other way which may be pointed out to him for arriving at the same salutary end."

Downing-street, April 19, 1796.

to fulfil this condition. It was hoped indeed that our suppliant strains might be suffered to steal into the august ear in a more propitious season. That season, however, invoked by so many vows, conjurations and prayers, did not come. Every declaration of hostility renovated, and every act pursued with double animosity—the over-running of Lombardy—the subjugation of Piedmont—the possession of its impregnable fortresses—the seizing on all the neutral states of Italy—our expulsion from Leghorn—instances for ever renewed, for our expulsion from Genoa—Spain rendered subject to them and hostile to us—Portugal bent under the yoke—half the empire over-run and ravaged, were the only signs which this mild republick thought proper to manifest of her pacifick sentiments. Every demonstration of an implacable rancour and an untameable pride were the only encouragements we received to the renewal of our supplications.

Here therefore they and we were fixed. Nothing was left to the British ministry but "to prosecute a war just and necessary"—a war equally just as at the time of our engaging in it—a war become ten times more necessary by every thing which happened afterwards. This resolution was soon, however, forgot. It felt the heat of the season and melted away. New hopes were entertained from supplication. No expectations, indeed, were then formed

formed from renewing a direct application to the French regicides through the agent-general for the humiliation of sovereigns. At length a step was taken in degradation which even went lower than all the rest. Deficient in merits of our own, a mediator was to be sought—and we looked for that mediator at Berlin! The king of Prussia's merits in abandoning the general cause might have obtained for him some sort of influence in favour of those whom he had deserted; but I have never heard that his Prussian majesty had lately discovered so marked an affection for the court of St. James's, or for the court of Vienna, as to excite much hope of his interposing a very powerful mediation to deliver them from the distresses into which he had brought them.

If humiliation is the element in which we live, if it is become not only our occasional policy but our habit, no great objection can be made to the modes in which it may be diversified; though, I confess, I cannot be charmed with the idea of our exposing our lazar sores at the door of every proud servitor of the French republick, where the court-dogs will not deign to lick them. We had, if I am not mistaken, a minister at that court, who might try its temper, and recede and advance as he found backwardness or encouragement. But to send a gentleman there on no other errand than this, and with no assurance whatever that he should

not find, where he did find, a repulse, seems to me to go far beyond all the demands of a humiliation merely politick. I hope it did not arise from a predilection for that mode of conduct.

The cup of bitterness was not, however, drained to the dregs. Basle and Berlin were not sufficient. After so many and so diversified repulses, we were resolved to make another experiment, and to try another mediator. Among the unhappy gentlemen in whose persons royalty is insulted and degraded at the seat of plebeian pride, and upstart insolence, there is a minister from Denmark at Paris. Without any previous encouragement to that, any more than the other steps, we sent through this turnpike to demand a passport for a person who on our part was to solicit peace in the metropolis, at the footstool of regicide itself. It was not to be expected that any one of those degraded beings could have influence enough to settle any part of the terms in favour of the candidates for further degradation; besides, such intervention would be a direct breach in their system, which did not permit one sovereign power to utter a word in the concerns of his equal.—Another repulse.—We were desired to apply directly in our persons.—We submitted and made the application.

It might be thought that here, at length, we had touched the bottom of humiliation; our lead was brought up covered with mud. But "in the

"lowest

"lowest deep, a lower deep" was to open for us still more profound abysses of disgrace and shame. However, in we leaped. We came forward in our own name. The passport, such a passport and safe conduct as would be granted to thieves, who might come in to betray their accomplices, and no better was granted to British supplication. To leave no doubt of its spirit, as soon as the rumour of this act of condescension could get abroad, it was formally announced with an explanation from authority, containing an invective against the ministry of Great Britain, their habitual frauds, their proverbial, *punick* perfidy. No such state paper, as a preliminary to a negociation for peace, has ever yet appeared. Very few declarations of war have ever shewn so much and so unqualified animosity. I place it below* as a diplomatick curiosity, and in order to be the better understood, in the few remarks I have to make upon a piece which indeed defies all

* *Official Note, extracted from the Journal of the Defenders of the Country.*

"*Executive Directory.*

"Different Journals have advanced that an English plenipotentiary had reached Paris, and had presented himself to the executive directory, but that his propositions not having appeared satisfactory, he had received orders instantly to quit France.

"All these assertions are equally false.

"The notices given, in the English papers, of a minister having been sent to Paris, there to treat of peace, bring to re-

[illegible]

all description—" None but itself can be its parallel."

I pass by all the insolence and contumely of the performance, as it comes from them. The present question

collection the overtures of Mr. Wickham to the ambassador of the publick at Basle, and the rumours circulated relative to the mission of Mr. Hammond to the court of Prussia. The *insignificance*, or rather the *subtle duplicity*, the *PUNICK style of* Mr. Wickham's note, is not forgotten. According to the partisans of the English ministry, it was to Paris that Mr. Hammond was to come to speak for peace: when his destination became publick, and it was known that he went to Prussia, the same writer repeated that it was to accelerate a peace, and, notwithstanding the object, now well known, of this negociation, was to engage Prussia to break her treaties with the republick, and to return into the coalition—the court of Berlin, faithful to its engagements, repulsed these *perfidious* propositions. But in converting this intrigue into a mission for peace, the English ministry joined to the hope of giving a new enemy of France, *that of justifying the continuance of the war in the eyes of the English nation, and of throwing all the odium of it on the French government.* Such was also the aim of Mr. Wickham's note. *Such is still that of the notices given at this time in the English papers.*

" This aim will appear evident, if we reflect how difficult it is, that the ambitious government of England should sincerely wish for a peace that would *snatch from it its maritime preponderancy, would re-establish the freedom of the seas, would give a new impulse to the Spanish, Dutch, and French marines,* and would carry to the highest degree of prosperity the industry and commerce of those nations in which it has always found *rivals*, and which it has considered as *enemies* of its commerce, when they were tired of being its *dupes.*

" But there will *no longer be any credit given to the pacifick*

inten-

question is not how we are to be affected with it in regard to our dignity. That is gone. I shall say no more about it. Light lie the earth on the ashes of English pride. I shall only observe upon it *politically*, and as furnishing a direction for our own conduct in this low business.

The very idea of a negociation for peace, whatever the inward sentiments of the party may be, implies some confidence in their faith, some degree of belief in the professions which are made concerning it. A temporary and occasional credit, at least, is granted. Otherwise men stumble on the very threshold. I therefore wish to ask what hope we can have of their good faith, who, as the very basis of the negotiation, assume the ill faith and treachery of those they have to deal with?

intentions of the English ministry, when it is known, that its gold and its intrigues, its open practices, and its insinuations, besiege more than ever the cabinet of Vienna, and are one of the principal obstacles to the negotiation which that cabinet *would of itself be induced to enter on for peace.*

"They will no longer *be credited*, finally, when the moment of the rumour of these overtures being circulated is considered. *The English nation supports impatiently the continuance of the war, a reply must be made to its complaints, its reproaches:* the parliament is about to re-open its sittings; the mouths of the orators who will declaim against the war must be shut, the demand of new taxes must be justified; and to obtain these results, it is necessary to be enabled to advance, that the French government refuses every reasonable proposition of peace."

The

The terms, as against us, must be such as imply a full security against a treacherous conduct—that is, such terms as this directory stated in its first declaration, to place us "in an utter impossibility of "executing our wretched projects." This is the omen, and the sole omen, under which we have consented to open our treaty.

The second observation I have to make upon it, (much connected undoubtedly with the first,) is, that they have informed you of the result they propose from the kind of peace they mean to grant you; that is to say, the union they propose among nations, with the view of rivalling our trade and destroying our naval power, and this they suppose (and with good reason too) must be the inevitable effect of their peace. It forms one of their principal grounds for suspecting our ministers could not be in good earnest in their proposition. They make no scruple before hand to tell you the whole of what they intend; and this is what we call, in the modern style, the acceptance of a proposition for peace! In old language it would be called a most haughty, offensive, and insolent rejection of all treaty.

Thirdly, they tell you what they conceive to be the perfidious policy which dictates your delusive offer; that is, the design of cheating not only them, but the people of England, against whose interest and inclination this war is supposed to be carried on.

If

If we proceed in this business, under this preliminary declaration, it seems to me, that we admit, (now for the third time) by something a great deal stronger than words, the truth of the charges of every kind which they make upon the British ministry, and the grounds of those foul imputations. The language used by us, which in other circumstances would not be exceptionable, in this case tends very strongly to confirm and realise the suspicion of our enemy. I mean the declaration, that if we do not obtain such terms of peace as suits our opinion of what our interest require, *then*, and in *that* case, we shall continue the war with vigour. This offer so reasoned, plainly implies, that without it, our leaders themselves entertain great doubts of the opinion and good affections of the British people; otherwise there does not appear any cause, why we should proceed under the scandalous construction of our enemy, upon the former offer made by Mr. Wickham, and on the new offer made directly at Paris. It is not, therefore, from a sense of dignity, but from the danger of radicating that false sentiment in the breasts of the enemy, that I think, under the auspices of this declaration, we cannot with the least hope of a good event, or indeed, with any regard to the common safety, proceed in the train of this negotiation. I wish ministry would seriously consider the importance of their seeming to confirm the enemy in an opinion, that his

frequent use of appeals to the people against their government has not been without its effect. If it puts an end to this war it will render another impracticable.

Whoever goes to the directorial presence under this passport, with this offensive comment, and foul explanation, goes, in the avowed sense of the court to which he is sent, as the instrument of a government dissociated from the interests and wishes of the nation, for the purpose of cheating both the people of France and the people of England. He goes out the declared emissary of a faithless ministry. He has perfidy for his credentials. He has national weakness for his full powers. I yet doubt whether any one can be found to invest himself with that character. If there should, it would be pleasant to read his instructions on the answer which he is to give to the directory, in case they should repeat to him the substance of the manifesto which he carries with him in his portfolio.

So much for the *first* manifesto of the regicide court which went along with the passport. Lest this declaration should seem the effect of haste, or a mere sudden effusion of pride and insolence, on full deliberation, about a week after comes out a second. This manifesto is dated the fifth of October, one day before the speech from the throne, on the vigil of the festive day of cordial unanimity so happily celebrated by all parties in the British

parliament.

parliament. In this piece the regicides, our worthy friends (I call them by advance and by courtesy what by law I shall be obliged to call them hereafter), our worthy friends, I say, renew and enforce the former declaration concerning our faith and sincerity, which they pinned to our passport. On three other points which run through all their declarations, they are more explicit than ever.

First, they more directly undertake to be the real representatives of the people of this kingdom: and on a supposition, in which they agree with our parliamentary reformers, that the house of commons is not that representative, the function being vacant, they, as our true constitutional organ, inform his majesty and the world of the sense of the nation. They tell us that "the English people "see with regret his majesty's government squan-"dering away the funds which had been granted "to him." This astonishing assumption of the publick voice of England, is but a slight fortaste of the usurpation which, on a peace, we may be assured they will make of all the powers in all the parts of our vassal constitution. "If they do these "things in the green tree, what shall be done in "the dry?"

Next they tell us a condition to our treaty, that "this government must abjure the unjust hatred it "bears to them, and at last open its ears to the "voice of humanity."—Truly this is, even from

them, an extraordinary demand. Hitherto it seems we have put wax into our ears to shut them up against the tender, soothing strains, in the *affettuoso* of humanity, warbled from the throats of Reubel, Carnot, Tallien, and the whole chorus of confiscators, domiciliary visitors, committee-men of research, jurors and presidents of revolutionary tribunals, regicides, assassins, massacrers, and septembrisers. It is not difficult to discern what sort of humanity our government is to learn from these syren singers. Our government also, I admit with some reason, as a step towards the proposed fraternity, is required to abjure the unjust hatred which it bears to this body of honour and virtue. I thank God I am neither a minister nor a leader of opposition. I protest I cannot do what they desire. I could not do it if I were under the guillotine; or as they ingeniously and pleasantly express it, "looking out of the little national window." Even at that opening I could receive none of their light. I am fortified against all such affections by the declaration of the government, which I must yet consider as lawful, made on the 29th of October 1793*, and still ringing in my ears. This declaration

* "In their place has succeeded a system destructive of all "publick order, maintained by proscriptions, exiles, and confiscations without number; by arbitrary imprisonment; by "massacres which cannot be remembered without horrour; "and

declaration was transmitted not only to our commanders by sea and land, but to our ministers in

"and at length by the execrable murder of a just and bene-
"ficent sovereign, and of the illustrious princess, who, with an
"unshaken firmness, has shared all the misfortunes of her
"royal consort, his protracted sufferings, his cruel cap-
"tivity and ignominious death."—"They (the allies) have
"have had to encounter acts of aggression without pretext,
"open violation of all treaties, unprovoked declarations of
"war; in a word, whatever corruption, intrigue or violence
"could effect for the purpose of openly avowed, of subvert-
"ing all the institutions of society, and of extending over all
"the nations of Europe that confusion, which has produced
"the misery of France."—

"This state of things cannot exist in France, without in-
"volving all the surrounding powers in one common danger,
"without giving them the right, without imposing it upon
"them as a duty, to stop the progress of an evil, which exists
"only by the successive violation of all law and all property,
"and which attacks the fundamental principles by which
"mankind is united in the bonds of civil society."—"The
"king would impose none other than equitable and moderate
"conditions, not such as the expence, the risks and the sacri-
"fices of the war might justify; but such as his majesty thinks
"himself under the indispensable necessity of requiring, with
"a view to these considerations, and still more to that of his
"own security and of the future tranquillity of Europe. His
"majesty desires nothing more sincerely than thus to termi-
"nate a war, which he in vain endeavoured to avoid, and all
"the calamities of which, as now experienced by France, are
"to be attributed only to the ambition, the perfidy, and the
"violence of those, whose crimes have involved their own
"country in misery, and disgraced all civilized nations."—
"The king promises on his part the suspension of hostilities,
"friendship,

in every court of Europe. It is the most eloquent and highly finished in the style, the most judicious in the choice of topicks, the most orderly in the arrangement, and the most rich in the colouring, without employing the smallest degree of exaggeration, of any state paper that has ever yet appeared. An ancient writer, Plutarch, I think it is, quotes some verses on the eloquence of Pericles, who is called "the only orator that left stings in "the minds of his hearers." Like his, the eloquence of the declararation, not contradicting, but enforcing sentiments of the truest humanity, has left stings that have penetrated more than skin-deep into my mind; and never can they be extracted by all the surgery of murder; never can

"friendship, and (as far as the course of events will allow, of "which the will of man cannot dispose) security and protec-"tion to all those who, by declaring for a monarchical form of "government, shall shake off the yoke of sanguinary anarchy; "of that anarchy which has broken all the most sacred bonds "of society, dissolved all the relations of civil life, violated "every right, confounded every duty; which uses the name of "liberty to exercise the most cruel tyranny, to annihilate all "property, to seize on all possessions; which founds its power "on the pretended consent of the people, and itself carries "fire and sword through extensive provinces for having de-"manded their laws, their religion, and their *lawful sovereign*."

Declaration sent by his majesty's command to the commanders of his majesty's fleets and armies employed against France, and to his majesty's ministers employed at foreign courts.

Whitehall, Oct. 29, 1793.

the

the throbbings they have created, be assuaged by all the emolient cataplasms of robbery and confiscation. I *cannot* love the republick.

The third point which they have more clearly expressed than ever, is of equal importance with the rest; and with them furnishes a complete view of the regicide system. For they demand as a condition, without which our ambassador of obedience cannot be received with any hope of success, that he shall be "provided with full powers to nego-"tiate a peace between the French republick and "Great Britain, and to conclude it *definitively* "between the TWO powers." With their spear they draw a circle about us. They will hear nothing of a joint treaty. We must make a peace separately from our allies. We must, as the very first and preliminary step, be guilty of that perfidy towards our friends and associates, with which they reproach us in our transactions with them our enemies. We are called upon scandalously to betray the fundamental securities to ourselves and to all nations. In my opinion (it is perhaps but a poor one) if we are meanly bold enough to send an ambassador such as this official note of the enemy requires, we cannot even dispatch our emissary without danger of being charged with a breach of our alliance. Government now understands the full meaning of the passport.

Strange

Strange revolutions have happened in the ways of thinking and in the feelings of men: but, it is a very extraordinary coalition of parties indeed, and a kind of unheard-of unanimity in publick councils, which can impose this new-discovered system of negotiation, as sound national policy on the understanding of a spectator of this wonderful scene, who judges on the principles of any thing he ever before saw, read, or heard of, and above all, on the understanding of a person who has in his eye the transactions of the last seven years.

I know it is supposed, that if good terms of capitulation are not granted, after we have thus so repeatedly hung out the white flag, the national spirit will revive with tenfold ardour. This is an experiment cautiously to be made. *Reculer pour mieux sauter*, according to the French bye-word, cannot be trusted to as a general rule of conduct. To diet a man into weakness and languor, afterwards to give him the greater strength, has more of the empirick than the rational physician. It is true that some persons have been kicked into courage; and this is no bad hint to give to those who are too forward and liberal in bestowing insults and outrages on their passive companions. But such a course does not at first view appear a well-chosen discipline to form men to a nice sense of honour, or a quick resentment of injuries. A

long

long habit of humiliation does not seem a very good preparative to manly and vigorous sentiment. It may not leave, perhaps, enough of energy in the mind fairly to discern what are good terms or what are not. Men low and dispirited may regard those terms as not at all amiss, which in another state of mind they would think intolerable: if they grow peevish in this state of mind, they may be roused, not against the enemy whom they have been taught to fear, but against the ministry *, who are more within their reach, and who have refused conditions that are not unreasonable, from power that they have been taught to consider as irresistible.

If all that for some months I have heard have the least foundation, I hope it has not, the ministers are, perhaps, not quite so much to be blamed, as their condition is to be lamented. I have been given to understand, that these proceedings are not in their origin properly theirs. It is said that there is a secret in the house of commons. It is said that ministers act not according to the votes, but according to the dispositions, of the majority. I hear that the minority has long since spoken the general sense of the nation; and that to prevent those who compose it from having the open and avowed lead in that house, or perhaps in both houses, it was necessary to pre-occupy their ground,

* Ut lethargicus hic, cum sit pugil, et medicum urget. Hor.

and

and to take their propositions out of their mouths, even with the hazard of being afterwards reproached with a compliance which it was foreseen would be fruitless.

If the general disposition of the people be, as I hear it is, for an immediate peace with regicide, without so much as considering our publick and solemn engagements to the party in France whose cause we had espoused, or the engagements expressed in our general alliances, not only without an inquiry into the terms, but with a certain knowledge that none but the worst terms will be offered, it is all over with us. It is strange, but it may be true, that as the danger from jacobinism is increased in my eyes and in yours, the fear of it is lessened in the eyes of many people who formerly regarded it with horrour. It seems, they act under the impression of terrours of another sort, which have frightened them out of their first apprehensions. But let their fears or their hopes, or their desires, be what they will, they should recollect, that they who would make peace without a previous knowledge of the terms, make a surrender. They are conquered. They do not treat; they receive the law. Is this the disposition of the people of England? Then the people of England are contented to seek in the kindness of a foreign systematick enemy, combined with a dangerous faction at home, a security which they cannot find in their own patriotism and their own courage.

They

They are willing to trust to the sympathy of regicides, the guarantee of the British monarchy. They are content to rest their religion on the piety of atheists by establishment. They are satisfied to seek in the clemency of practised murderers the security of their lives. They are pleased to confide their property to the safeguard of those who are robbers by inclination, interest, habit, and system. If this be our deliberate mind, truly we deserve to lose, what it is impossible we should long retain, the name of a nation.

In matters of state, a constitutional competence to act, is in many cases the smallest part of the question. Without disputing (God forbid I should dispute) the sole competence of the king and the parliament, each in its province, to decide on war and peace, I venture to say, no war *can* be long carried on against the will of the people. This war, in particular, cannot be carried on unless they are enthusiastically in favour of it. Acquiescence will not do. There must be zeal. Universal zeal in such a cause, and at such a time as this is, cannot be looked for; neither is it necessary. Zeal in the larger part carries the force of the whole. Without this, no government, certainly not our government, is capable of a great war. None of the ancient regular governments have wherewithal to fight abroad with a foreign foe, and at home to overcome repining, reluctance, and chicane. It must

must be some portentous thing, like regicide France, that can exhibit such a prodigy. Yet even she, the mother of monsters, more prolifick than the country of old called *Ferax monstrorum*, shews symptoms of being almost effete already; and she will be so, unless the fallow of a peace comes to recruit her fertility. But whatever may be represented concerning the meanness of the popular spirit, I, for one, do not think so desperately of the British nation. Our minds, as I said, are light, but they are not depraved. We are dreadfully open to delusion and to dejection; but we are capable of being animated and undeceived.

It cannot be concealed. We are a divided people. But in divisions, where a part is to be taken, we are to make a muster of our strength. I have often endeavoured to compute and to class those who, in any political view, are to be called the people. Without doing something of this sort we must proceed absurdly. We should not be much wiser, if we pretended to very great accuracy in our estimate: but I think, in the calculation I have made, the errour cannot be very material. In England and Scotland, I compute that those of adult age, not declining in life, of tolerable leisure for such discussions, and of some means of information, more, or less, and who are above menial dependence, (or what virtually is such) may amount to about four hundred thousand. There is such a thing

thing as a natural representative of the people. This body is that representative; and on this body, more than on the legal constituent, the artificial representative depends. This is the British publick; and it is a publick very numerous. The rest, when feeble, are the objects of protection; when strong, the means of force. They who affect to consider that part of us in any other light, insult while they cajole us; they do not want us for counsellors in deliberation, but to list us as soldiers for battle.

Of these four hundred thousand political citizens, I look upon one fifth, or about eighty thousand, to be pure jacobins; utterly incapable of amendment; objects of eternal vigilance; and when they break out, of legal constraint. On these, no reason, no argument, no example, no venerable authority, can have the slightest influence. They desire a change; and they will have it if they can. If they cannot have it by English cabal, they will make no sort of scruple of having it by the cabal of France, into which already they are virtually incorporated. It is only their assured and confident expectation of the advantages of French fraternity and the approaching blessings of regicide intercourse, that skins over their mischievous dispositions with a momentary quiet.

This minority is great and formidable. I do not know whether if I aimed at the total overthrow of

a kingdom, I should wish to be encumbered with a larger body of partisans. They are more easily disciplined and directed than if the number were greater. These, by their spirit of intrigue, and by their restless agitating activity, are of a force far superiour to their numbers; and if times grew the least critical, have the means of debauching or intimidating many of those who are now sound, as well as of adding to their force large bodies of the more passive part of the nation. This minority is numerous enough to make a mighty cry for peace, or for war, or for any object they are led vehemently to desire. By passing from place to place with a velocity incredible, and diversifying their character and description, they are capable of mimicking the general voice. We must not always judge of the generality of the opinion by the noise of the acclamation.

The majority, the other four fifths, is perfectly sound; and of the best possible disposition to religion, to government, to the true and undivided interest of their country. Such men are generally disposed to peace. They who are in possession of all they wish are languid and improvident. With this fault (and I admit its existence in all its extent) they would not endure to hear of a peace that led to the ruin of every thing for which peace is dear to them. However, the desire of peace is essentially the weak side of that kind of men. All

men

men that are ruined, are ruined on the side of their natural propensities. There they are unguarded. Above all, good men do not suspect that their destruction is attempted through their virtues. This their enemies are perfectly aware of: and accordingly, they, the most turbulent of mankind, who never make a scruple to shake the tranquillity of their country to its center, raise a continual cry for peace with France. Peace with regicide, and war with the rest of the world, is their motto. From the beginning, and even whilst the French gave the blows, and we hardly opposed the *vis inertiæ* to their efforts, from that day to this hour, like importunate Guinea-fowls crying one note day and night, they have called for peace.

In this they are, as I confess in all things they are, perfectly consistent. They who wish to unite themselves to your enemies, naturally desire, that you should disarm yourself by a peace with these enemies. But it passes my conception, how they, who wish well to their country on its ancient system of laws and manners, come not to be doubly alarmed, when they find nothing but a clamour for peace, in the mouths of the men on earth the least disposed to it in their natural or in their habitual character.

I have a good opinion of the general abilities of the Jacobins: not that I suppose them better born than others; but strong passions awaken the faculties.

faculties. They suffer not a particle of the man to be lost. The spirit of enterprise gives to this description the full use of all their native energies. If I have reason to conceive that my enemy, who, as such, must have an interest in my destruction, is also a person of discernment and sagacity, then I must be quite sure, that in a contest, the object he violently pursues, is the very thing by which my ruin is likely to be the most perfectly accomplished. Why do the Jacobins cry for peace? Because they know, that this point gained, the rest will follow of course. On our part, why are all the rules of prudence, as sure as the laws of material nature, to be at this time reversed? How comes it, that now, for the first time, men think it right to be governed by the counsels of their enemies? Ought they not rather to tremble, when they are persuaded to travel on the same road; and to tend to the same place of rest?

The minority I speak of, is not susceptible of an impression from the topicks of argument to be used to the larger part of the community. I therefore do not address to them any part of what I have to say. The more forcibly I drive my arguments against their system, so as to make an impression where I wish to make it, the more strongly I rivet them in their sentiments. As for us, who compose the far larger, and what I call the far better part of the people; let me say, that we have not been

quite

quite fairly dealt with when called to this deliberation. The Jacobin minority have been abundantly supplied with stores and provisions of all kinds towards their warfare. No sort of argumentative materials, suited to their purposes, have been withheld. False they are, unsound, sophistical; but they are regular in their direction. They all bear one way: and they all go to the support of the substantial merits of their cause. The others have not had the question so much as fairly stated to them.

There has not been in this century, any foreign peace or war, in its origin, the fruit of popular desire: except the war that was made with Spain in 1739. Sir Robert Walpole was forced into the war by the people, who were inflamed to this measure by the most leading politicians, by the first orators, and the greatest poets of the time. For that war, Pope sung his dying notes. For that war, Johnson, in more energetick strains, exhausted the voice of his early genius. For that war, Glover distinguished himself in the way in which his muse was the most natural and happy. The court reluctantly followed the politicians in the cry for a war which threatened little profit, and which promised victories that were attended with something more solid than glory. A war with Spain was a war of plunder. In the present contest with regicide, Mr. Pitt has not [illegible] hope for a few days [illegible]

[illegible]

in the lottery of war, to attempt the lower part of our character. He can only maintain it by an appeal to the higher; and to those, in whom that higher part is the most predominant, he must look the most for his support. Whilst he holds out no inducements to the wise, nor bribes to the avaricious, he may be forced by a vulgar cry into a peace ten times more ruinous than the most disastrous war. The weaker he is in the fund of motives which apply to our avarice, to our laziness, and to our lassitude, if he means to carry the war to any end at all, the stronger he ought to be in his addresses to our magnanimity and to our reason.

In stating that Walpole was driven by a popular clamour into a measure not to be justified, I do not mean wholly to excuse his conduct. My time of observation did not exactly coincide with that event: but I read much of the controversies then carried on. Several years after the contests of parties had ceased, the people were amused, and in a degree warmed with them. The events of that æra seemed then of magnitude, which the revolutions of our time have reduced to parochial importance; and the debates, which then shook the nation, now appear of no higher moment than a discussion in a vestry. When I was very young, a general fashion told me I was to admire some of the writings against that minister; a little more maturity taught me as much to despise them. I observed

observed one fault in his general proceeding. He never manfully put forward the entire strength of his cause. He temporised; he managed; and adopting very nearly the sentiments of his adversaries, he opposed their inferences. This, for a political commander, is the choice of a weak post. His adversaries had the better of the argument, as he handled it, not as the reason and justice of his cause enabled him to manage it. I say this, after having seen, and with some care examined, the original documents concerning certain important transactions of those times. They perfectly satisfied me of the extreme injustice of that war, and of the falsehood of the colours, which to his own ruin, and guided by a mistaken policy, he suffered to be daubed over that measure. Some years after, it was my fortune to converse with many of the principal actors against that minister, and with those, who principally excited that clamour. None of them, no not one, did in the least defend the measure or attempt to justify their conduct. They condemned it as freely as they would have done in commenting upon any proceeding in history, in which they were totally unconcerned. Thus it will be. They who stir up the people to improper desires, whether of peace or war, will be condemned by themselves. They who weakly yield to them will be condemned by history.

In my opinion, the present ministry are as far

from doing full justice to their cause in this war, as Walpole was from doing justice to the peace which at that time he was willing to preserve. They throw the light on one side only of their case; though it is impossible they should not observe, that the other side which is kept in the shade has its importance too. They must know, that France is formidable, not only as she is France, but as she is Jacobin France. They knew from the beginning that the jacobin party was not confined to that country. They knew, they felt, the strong disposition of the same faction in both countries to communicate and to co-operate. For some time past, these two points have been kept, and even industriously kept, out of sight. France is considered as merely a foreign power; and the seditious English only as a domestick faction. The merits of the war with the former have been argued solely on political grounds. To prevent the mischievous doctrines of the latter, from corrupting our minds, matter and argument have been supplied abundantly, and even to surfeit, on the excellency of our own government. But nothing has been done to make us feel in what manner the safety of that government is connected with the principle and with the issue of this war. For any thing which in the late discussion has appeared, the war is entirely collateral to the state of jacobinism; as truly a foreign war to us and to all our home concerns,

as

as the war with Spain in 1739, about *Garda-Costas*, the Madrid Convention, and the fable of Captain *Jenkins's* ears.

Whenever the adverse party has raised a cry for peace with the regicide, the answer has been little more then this, "that the administration wished for "such a peace, full as much as the opposition; but "that the time was not convenient for making it." Whatever else has been said was much in the same spirit. Reasons of this kind never touched the substantial merits of the war. They were in the nature of dilatory pleas, exceptions of form, previous questions. Accordingly all the arguments against a compliance with what was represented as the popular desire, (urged on with all possible vehemence and earnestness by the jacobins) have appeared flat and languid, feeble and evasive. They appeared to aim only at gaining time. They never entered into the peculiar and distinctive character of the war. They spoke neither to the understanding nor to the heart. Cold as ice themselves, they never could kindle in our breast a spark of that zeal, which is necessary to a conflict with an adverse zeal; much less were they made to infuse into our minds, that stubborn presevering spirit, which alone is capable of bearing up against those vicissitudes of fortune, which will probably occur, and those burthens which must be inevitably borne in a long war. I speak it emphatically, and with a desire

desire that it should be marked, in a *long* war; because, without such a war, no experience has yet told us, that a dangerous power has ever been reduced to measure or to reason. I do not throw back my view to the Peloponnesian war of twenty-seven years; nor to two of the punick wars, the first of twenty-four, the second of eighteen; nor to the more recent war concluded by the treaty of Westphalia, which continued, I think, for thirty. I go to what is but just fallen behind living memory, and immediately touches our own country. Let the portion of our history from the year 1689 to 1713 be brought before us. We shall find, that in all that period of twenty-four years, there were hardly five that could be called a season of peace; and the interval between the two wars was in reality, nothing more then a very active preparation for renovated hostility. During that period, every one of the propositions of peace came from the enemy: The first, when they were accepted, at the peace of Ryswick; the second, where they were rejected, at the congress at Gertrudenburgh; the last, when the war ended by the treaty of Utrecht. Even then, a very great part of the nation, and that which contained by far the most intelligent statesmen, was against the conclusion of the war. I do not enter into the merits of that question as between the parties. I only state the existence of that opinion as a fact, from whence

you

you may draw such an inference as you think properly arises from it.

It is for us at present to recollect what we have been; and to consider what, if we please, we may be still. At the period of those wars, our principal strength was found in the resolution of the people; and that in the resolution of a part only of the then whole, which bore no proportion to our existing magnitude. England and Scotland were not united at the beginning of that mighty struggle. When, in the course of the contest, they were conjoined, it was in a raw, an ill-cemented, an unproductive union. For the whole duration of the war, and long after, the names and other outward and visible signs of approximation, rather augmented than diminished our insular feuds. They were rather the causes of new discontents and new troubles, than promoters of cordiality and affection. The now single and potent Great Britain was then, not only two countries, but, from the party heats in both, and the divisions formed in each of them, each of the old kingdoms within itself, in effect, was made up of two hostile nations. Ireland, now so large a source of the common opulence and power, and which wisely managed might be made much more beneficial and much more effective, was then the heaviest of the burthens. An army not much less than forty thousand men, was drawn from the general effort, to keep that kingdom

kingdom in a poor, unfruitful, and resourceless subjection.

Such was the state of the empire. The state of our finances was worse, if possible. Every branch of the revenue became less productive after the revolution. Silver, not as now a sort of counter, but the body of the current coin, was reduced so low, as not to have above three parts in four of the value in the shilling. In the greater part the value hardly amounted to a fourth. It required a dead expence of three millions sterling to renew the coinage. Publick credit, that great but ambiguous principle, which has so often been predicted as the cause of our certain ruin, but which for a century has been the constant companion, and often the means, of our prosperity and greatness, had its origin, and was cradled, I may say, in bankruptcy and beggary. At this day we have seen parties contending to be admitted, at a moderate premium, to advance eighteen millions to the Exchequer. For infinitely smaller loans, the chancellor of the exchequer of that day, Montagu, the father of publick credit, counter-securing the state by the appearance of the city with the Lord Mayor of London at his side, was obliged, like a solicitor for an hospital, to go cap in hand from shop to shop, to borrow an hundred pound and even smaller sums. When made up in driblets as they could, their best securities were at an interest of 12 per cent. Even the

the paper of the Bank (now at par with cash, and generally preferred to it) was often at a discount of twenty per cent. By this the state of the rest may be judged.

As to our commerce, the imports and exports of the nation, now six and forty million, did not then amount to ten. The inland trade, which is commonly passed by in this sort of estimates, but which, in part growing out of the foreign, and connected with it, is more advantageous, and more substantially nutritive to the state, is not only grown in a proportion of near five to one as the foreign, but has been augmented, at least, in a tenfold proportion. When I came to England, I remember but one river navigation, the rate of carriage on which was limited by an act of parliament. It was made in the reign of William the Third; I mean that of the Aire and Calder. The rate was settled at thirteen pence. So high a price demonstrated the feebleness of these beginnings of our inland intercourse. In my time, one of the longest and sharpest contests I remember in your house, and which rather resembled a violent contention amongst national parties than a local dispute, was, as well as I can recollect, to hold the price up to three pence. Even this, which a very scanty justice to the proprietors required, was done with infinite difficulty. As to private credit, there were not, as I believe, twelve bankers shops at that time out of London.

In

In this [illegible]
I cannot [illegible]
chines of [illegible]
They [illegible]
this [illegible]
an ex[illegible]
cres[illegible]
tion [illegible]
of [illegible]
Ou[illegible]
wa[illegible]
the [illegible]
po[illegible]
fo[illegible]
fin[illegible]
un[illegible]
ye[illegible]
En[illegible]
ev[illegible]

in [illegible]
mo[illegible]
ve[illegible]
the [illegible]
tio[illegible]
ch[illegible]
fro[illegible]
lat[illegible]
co[illegible]

[illegible] they to [illegible] the propositions of [illegible] for peace, but through the [illegible] of a vigorous war. This address was [illegible] a hot, a divided, a factious, and in a [illegible] part, disaffected house of commons, and it was carried *nemine contradicente*.

While that first war (which was ill [illegible] the treaty of Ryswick) slept in the [illegible] peace, a new conflagration was in its [illegible] causes. A fresh and a far greater war was [illegible] preparation. A year had hardly elapsed when [illegible] were made for renewing the contest with tenfold fury. The steps which were taken, at that time, to compose, to reconcile, to unite, and to discipline all Europe against the growth of France, certainly furnish [illegible] the finest and most interesting part in the history of that great period. It formed the master-piece of king William's policy, dexterity, and perseverance. Full of the idea of preserving, not only [illegible] with order, to our country, but to [illegible] the political liberty, the order, and [illegible] under a natural [illegible] to [illegible] England the [illegible] and on the [illegible] will be re- [illegible] not the [illegible]

long continuance of the war, the commons agreed to address the crown in the following manly, spirited, and truly animated style.

"This is the EIGHTH year in which your ma-
" jesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects the com-
" mons in parliament assembled, have assisted your
" majesty with large supplies for carrying on a just
" and necessary war, in defence of our religion, and
" preservation of our laws, and vindication of the
" rights and liberties of the people of England."

Afterwards they proceed in this manner:—
" To shew to your majesty and all christendom,
" that the commons of England will not be *amused*
" or diverted from their firm resolutions of obtain-
" ing by WAR, a safe and honourable peace, we do,
" in the name of those we represent, renew our
" assurances to support your majesty and your go-
" vernment against all your enemies at home and
" abroad; and that we will effectually assist you
" in carrying on the war against France."

The amusement and diversion they speak of, was the suggestion of a treaty *proposed by the enemy*, and announced from the throne. Thus the people of England felt in the *eighth*, not in the *fourth* year of the war. No sighing or panting after negociation; no motions from the opposition to force the ministry into a peace; no messages from ministers to palsy and deaden the resolution of parliament or the spirit of the nation. They did not so much as

as advise the king to listen to the propositions of the enemy, nor to seek for peace, but through the mediation of a vigorous war. This address was moved in a hot, a divided, a factious, and in a great part, disaffected house of commons, and it was carried *nemine contradicente.*

While that first war (which was ill smothered by the treaty of Ryswick) slept in the thin ashes of a seeming peace, a new conflagration was in its immediate causes. A fresh and a far greater war was in preparation. A year had hardly elapsed when arrangements were made for renewing the contest with tenfold fury. The steps which were taken, at that time, to compose, to reconcile, to unite, and to discipline all Europe against the growth of France, certainly furnish to a statesman the finest and most interesting part in the history of that great period. It formed the master-piece of king William's policy, dexterity, and perseverance. Full of the idea of preserving, not only a local civil liberty united with order, to our country, but to embody it in the political liberty, the order, and the independence of nations united under a natural head, the king called upon his parliament to put itself into a posture "*to preserve to England the* "*weight and influence it at present had on the* "*councils and affairs* ABROAD. It will be re- "quisite *Europe* should see you will not be "wanting to yourselves."

Baffled

Baffled as that monarch was, and almost heart-broken at the disappointment he met with in the mode he first proposed for that great end, he held on his course. He was faithful to his object; and in councils, as in arms, over and over again repulsed, over and over again he returned to the charge. All the mortifications he had suffered from the last parliament, and the greater he had to apprehend from that newly chosen, were not capable of relaxing the vigour of his mind. He was in Holland when he combined the vast plan of his foreign negotiations. When he came to open his design to his ministers in England, even the sober firmness of Somers, the undaunted resolution of Shrewsbury, and the adventurous spirit of Montagu and Orford were staggered. They were not yet mounted to the elevation of the king. The cabinet, then the regency, met on the subject at Tunbridge Wells the 28th of August, 1698; and there, Lord Somers holding the pen, after expressing doubts on the state of the continent, which they ultimately refer to the king, as best informed, they give him a most discouraging portrait of the spirit of this nation. "So far as relates to Eng-
"land," say these ministers, "it would be want of
"duty not to give your majesty this clear account,
"that *there is a deadness and want of spirit in the na-*
"*tion universally*, so as not to be at all disposed to
"*entering into a new war*. That they seem to be *tired*
"*out*

"*out with taxes* to a degree beyond what was dis-
" cerned, till it appeared upon occasion of the *late*
" *elections*. This is the truth of the fact upon
" which your majesty will determine what reso-
" lution ought to be taken."

His majesty did determine; and did take and pursue his resolution. In all the tottering imbecility of a new government, and with parliament totally unmanageable, he persevered. He persevered to expel the fears of his people, by his fortitude—To steady their fickleness, by his constancy—To expand their narrow prudence, by his enlarged wisdom—To sink their factious temper in his publick spirit.—In spite of his people he resolved to make them great and glorious; to make England inclined to shrink into her narrow self, the arbitress of Europe, the tutelary angel of the human race. In spite of the ministers, who staggered under the weight that his mind imposed upon theirs, unsupported as they felt themselves by the popular spirit, he infused into them his own soul; he renewed in them their ancient heart; he rallied them in the same cause.

It required some time to accomplish this work. The people were first gained, and through them their distracted representatives. Under the influence of King William, Holland had rejected the allurements of every seduction, and had resisted the terrours of every menace. With Hannibal at her

gates,

gates, she had nobly and magnanimously refused all separate treaty, or any thing which might for a moment appear to divide her affection or her interest, or even to distinguish her in identity from England. Having settled the great point of the consolidation (which he hoped would be eternal) of the countries made for a common interest, and common sentiment, the king, in his message to both houses, calls their attention to the affairs of the *States General.* The house of lords was perfectly sound, and entirely impressed with the wisdom and dignity of the king's proceedings. In answer to the message, which you will observe was narrowed to a single point (the danger of the States General) after the usual professions of zeal for his service, the lords opened themselves at large. They go far beyond the demands of the message. They express themselves as follows: " We take this occasion *further* to assure your majesty, that we are " sensible of the *great and imminent danger to which* " *the States General are exposed. And we perfectly* " *agree with them in believing that their safety and* " *ours are so inseparably united, that whatsoever* " *is ruin to the one must be fatal to the other.*

" We humbly desire your majesty will be pleased, " *not only* to make good all the articles of any " *former* treaties to the States General, but that you " will enter into a strict league, offensive and defen- " sive, with them, *for their common preservation;*

" *and*

" *and that you will invite into it all princes and states*
" *who are concerned in the present visible danger,*
" *arising from the union of France and Spain.*

" And we further desire your majesty, that you
" will be pleased to enter into such alliances with
" the *emperour*, as your majesty shall think fit, pur-
" suant to the ends of the treaty of 1689; towards
" all which we assure your majesty of our hearty
" and sincere assistance; not doubting, but when-
" ever your majesty shall be obliged to be engaged
" for the defence of your allies, *and securing the*
" *liberty and quiet of Europe*, Almighty God will
" protect your sacred person in so righteous a cause.
" And that the unanimity, wealth, and courage of
" your subjects will carry your majesty with ho-
" nour and success *through all the difficulties of a*
" JUST WAR."

The house of commons was more reserved; the late popular disposition was still in a great degree prevalent in the representative, after it had been made to change in the constituent body. The principle of the grand alliance was not directly recognised in the resolution of the commons, nor the war announced, though they were well aware the alliance was formed for the war. However, compelled by the returning sense of the people, they went so far as to fix the three great immoveable pillars of the safety and greatness of England, as they were then, as they are now, and as they must

ever

ever be to the end of time. They asserted in general terms the necessity of supporting Holland; of keeping united with our allies; and maintaining the liberty of Europe; though they restricted their vote to the succours stipulated by actual treaty. But now they were fairly embarked; they were obliged to go with the course of the vessel; and the whole nation, split before into an hundred adverse factions, with a king at its head evidently declining to his tomb, the whole nation, lords, commons, and people, proceeded as one body, informed by one soul. Under the British union, the union of Europe was consolidated; and it long held together with a degree of cohesion, firmness, and fidelity not known before or since in any political combination of that extent.

Just as the last hand was given to this immense and complicated machine, the master workman died: but the work was formed on true mechanical principles: and it was as truly wrought. It went by the impulse it had received from the first mover. The man was dead: but the grand alliance survived in which king William lived and reigned. That heartless and dispirited people, whom lord Somers had represented about two years before, as dead in energy and operation, continued that war to which it was supposed they were unequal in mind, and in means, for near thirteen years.

For what have I entered into all this detail? To

what purpose have I recalled your view to the end of the last century? It has been done to shew that the British nation was then a great people—to point out how and by what means they came to be exalted above the vulgar level, and to take that lead which they assumed among mankind. To qualify us for that pre-eminence, we had then an high mind, and a constancy unconquerable; we were then inspired with no flashy passions; but such as were durable as well as warm; such as corresponded to the great interests we had at stake. This force of character was inspired, as all such spirit must ever be, from above. Government gave the impulse. As well may we fancy, that, of itself the sea will swell, and that without winds the billows will insult the adverse shore, as that the gross mass of the people will be moved, and elevated, and continue by a steady and permanent direction to bear upon one point, without the influence of superiour authority, or superiour mind.

This impulse ought, in my opinion, to have been given in this war; and it ought to have been continued to it at every instant. It is made, if ever war was made, to touch all the great springs of action in the human breast. It ought not to have been a war of apology. The minister had, in this conflict, wherewithal to glory in success; to be consoled in adversity; to hold high his principle in all fortunes. If it were not given him to support the falling edifice,

edifice, he ought to bury himself under the ruins of the civilized world. All the art of Greece, and all the pride and power of eastern monarchs, never heaped upon their ashes so grand a monument.

There were days when his great mind was up to the crisis of the world he was called to act in*. His manly eloquence was equal to the elevated wisdom of such sentiments. But the little have triumphed over the great; an unnatural (as it should seem) not an unusual victory. I am sure you cannot forget with how much uneasiness we heard in conversation, the language of more than one gentleman at the opening of this contest, "that he was willing to "try the war for a year or two, and if it did not "succeed, then to vote for peace." As if war was a matter of experiment! As if you could take it up or lay it down as an idle frolick! As if the dire goddess that presides over it, with her murderous spear in her hand, and her gorgon at her breast, was a coquette to be flirted with! We ought with reverence to approach that tremendous divinity, that loves courage, but commands counsel. War never leaves, where it found a nation. It is never to be entered into without mature deliberation; not a deliberation lengthened out into a perplexing indecision, but a deliberation leading to a sure and fixed judgment. When so taken up, it is not to be abandoned without reason as valid,

* See the Declaration.

as fully, and as extensively considered. Peace may be made as unadvisedly as war. Nothing is so rash as fear; and the counsels of pusillanimity very rarely put off, whilst they are always sure to aggravate, the evils from which they would fly.

In that great war carried on against Louis the XIVth, for near eighteen years, government spared no pains to satisfy the nation, that though they were to be animated by a desire of glory, glory was not their ultimate object; but that every thing dear to them, in religion, in law, in liberty, every thing which as freemen, as Englishmen, and as citizens of the great commonwealth of Christendom, they had at heart, was then at stake. This was to know the true art of gaining the affections and confidence of an high-minded people; this was to understand human nature. A danger to avert a danger—a present inconvenience and suffering to prevent a foreseen future, and a worse calamity —these are the motives that belong to an animal, who, in his constitution, is at once adventurous and provident; circumspect and daring; whom his Creator has made, as the poet says, "of large dis-" course, looking before and after." But never can a vehement and sustained spirit of fortitude be kindled in a people by a war of calculation. It has nothing that can keep the mind erect under the gusts of adversity. Even where men are willing, as sometimes they are, to barter their blood

for

for lucre, to hazard their safety for the gratification of their avarice, the passion, which animates them to that sort of conflict, like all the short-sighted passions, must see its objects distinct and near at hand. The passions of the lower order are hungry and impatient. Speculative plunder; contingent spoil; future, long adjourned, uncertain booty; pillage which must enrich a late posterity, and which possibly may not reach to posterity at all; these, for any length of time, will never support a mercenary war. The people are in the right. The calculation of profit in all such wars is false. On balancing the account of such wars, ten thousand hogsheads of sugar are purchased at ten thousand times their price. The blood of man should never be shed but to redeem the blood of man. It is well shed for our family, for our friends, for our God, for our country, for our kind. The rest is vanity; the rest is crime.

In the war of the grand alliance, most of these considerations voluntarily and naturally had their part. Some were pressed into the service. The political interest easily went into the track of the natural sentiment. In the reverse course the carriage does not follow freely. I am sure the natural feeling, as I have just said, is a far more predominant ingredient in this war, than in that of any other that ever was waged by this kingdom.

If the war made to prevent the union of two crowns

crowns upon one head was a just war, this, which is made to prevent the tearing all crowns from all heads which ought to wear them, and with the crowns to smite off the sacred heads themselves, this is a just war.

If a war to prevent Louis the XIVth from imposing his religion was just, a war to prevent the murderers of Louis the XVIth from imposing their irreligion upon us is just; a war to prevent the operation of a system, which makes life without dignity, and death without hope, is a just war.

If to preserve political independence and civil freedom to nations, was a just ground of war; a war to preserve national independence, property, liberty, life, and honour, from certain, universal havock, is a war just, necessary, manly, pious; and we are bound to persevere in it by every principle, divine and human, as long as the system which menaces them all, and all equally, has an existence in the world.

You, who have looked at this matter with as fair and impartial an eye as can be united with a feeling heart, you will not think it an hardy assertion, when I affirm, that it were far better to be conquered by any other nation, than to have this faction for a neighbour. Before I felt myself authorized to say this, I considered the state of all the countries in Europe for these last three hundred years, which have been obliged to submit to a

foreign

foreign law. In most of those I found the condition of the annexed countries even better, certainly not worse, than the lot of those which were the patrimony of the conqueror. They wanted some blessings—but they were free from many very great evils. They were rich and tranquil. Such was Artois, Flanders, Lorrain, Alsatia, under the old government of France. Such was Silesia under the king of Prussia. They who are to live in the vicinity of this new fabrick, are to prepare to live in perpetual conspiracies and seditions; and to end at last, in being conquered, if not to her dominion, to her resemblance. But when we talk of conquest by other nations, it is only to put a case. This is the only power in Europe by which it is *possible* we should be conquered. To live under the continual dread of such immeasurable evils is itself a grievous calamity. To live without the dread of them is to turn the danger into the disaster. The influence of such a France is equal to a war, its example, more wasting than an hostile irruption. The hostility with any other power is separable and accidental; this power, by the very condition of its existence, by its very essential constitution, is in a state of hostility with us, and with all civilised people*.

A government of the nature of that set up at our very door has never been hitherto seen, or even imagined, in Europe. What our relation to it will

* See Declaration, Whitehall, October 29, 1793.

be

be cannot be judged by other relations. It is a serious thing to have connection with a people, who live only under positive, arbitrary, and changeable institutions; and those not perfected nor supplied, nor explained, by any common acknowledged rule of moral science. I remember that in one of my last conversations with the late lord Camden, we were struck much in the same manner with the abolition in France of the law, as a science of methodised and artificial equity. France, since her revolution, is under the sway of a sect, whose leaders have deliberately, at one stroke, demolished the whole body of that jurisprudence which France had pretty nearly in common with other civilised countries. In that jurisprudence were contained the elements and principles of the law of nations, the great ligament of mankind. With the law they have of course destroyed all seminaries in which jurisprudence was taught, as well as all the corporations established for its conservation. I have not heard of any country, whether in Europe or Asia, or even in Africa on this side of mount Atlas, which is wholly without some such colleges and such corporations, except France. No man in a publick or private concern, can divine by what rule or principle her judgments are to be directed; nor is there to be found a professor in any university, or a practitioner in any court, who will hazard an opinion of what is or is not law in France, in any case whatever.

whatever. They have not only annulled all their old treaties; but they have renounced the law of nations from whence treaties have their force. With a fixed design they have outlawed themselves, and to their power outlawed all other nations.

Instead of the religion and the law by which they were in a great politick communion with the christian world, they have constructed their republick on three bases, all fundamentally opposite to those on which the communities of Europe are built. Its foundation is laid in regicide; in jacobinism; and in atheism; and it has joined to those principles, a body of systematick manners which secures their operation.

If I am asked, how I would be understood in the use of these terms, regicide, jacobinism, atheism, and a system of corresponding manners, and their establishment, I will tell you.

I call a commonwealth *regicide*, which lays it down as a fixed law of nature, and a fundamental right of man, that all government, not being a democracy, is an usurpation *. That all kings,

* Nothing could be more solemn than their promulgation of this principle as a preamble to the destructive code of their famous articles for the decomposition of society into whatever country they should enter. "La convention nationale, après avoir entendu le rapport de ses comités de finances, de la guerre & diplomatiques réunis, fidelle *au principe de souveraintée de peuples qui ne lui permet pas de reconnoître aucune institution qui y porte atteinte*," &c. &c. Décret sur le rapport de Cambon. Dec. 18, 1792, and see the subsequent proclamation.

as

as such, are usurpers; and for being kings, may and ought to be put to death, with their wives, families and adherents. The commonwealth which acts uniformly upon those principles; and which after abolishing every festival of religion, chooses the most flagrant act of a murderous regicide treason for a feast of eternal commemoration, and which forces all her people to observe it—This I call *regicide by establishment.*

Jacobinism is the revolt of the enterprising talents of a country against its property. When private men form themselves into associations for the purpose of destroying the pre-existing laws and institutions of their country; when they secure to themselves an army by dividing amongst the people of no property, the estates of the ancient and lawful proprietors; when a state recognises those acts; when it does not make confiscations for crimes, but makes crimes for confiscations; when it has its principal strength, and all its resources in such a violation of property; when it stands chiefly upon such a violation; massacring by judgments, or otherwise, those who make any struggle for their old legal government, and their legal, hereditary, or acquired possessions—I call this *jacobinism by establishment.*

I call it *atheism by establishment*, when any state, as such, shall not acknowledge the existence of God as a moral governour of the world; when it shall offer to him no religious or moral worship;—when

it

it shall abolish the Christian religion by a regular decree;—when it shall persecute with a cold, unrelenting, steady cruelty, by every mode of confiscation, imprisonment, exile, and death, all its ministers;—when it shall generally shut up, or pull down, churches; when the few buildings which remain of this kind shall be opened only for the purpose of making a profane apotheosis of monsters, whose vices and crimes have no parallel amongst men, and whom all other men consider as objects of general detestation, and the severest animadversion of law. When, in the place of that religion of social benevolence, and of individual self-denial, in mockery of all religion, they institute impious, blasphemous, indecent theatrick rites, in honour of their vitiated, perverted reason, and erect altars to the personification of their own corrupted and bloody republick;—when schools and seminaries are founded at publick expense to poison mankind, from generation to generation, with the horrible maxims of this impiety;—when wearied out with incessant martyrdom, and the cries of a people hungering and thirsting for religion, they permit it, only as a tolerated evil—I call this *atheism by establishment.*

When to these establishments of regicide, of jacobinism, and of atheism, you add the *correspondent system of manners*, no doubt can be left on the mind of a thinking man, concerning their determined

hostility

hostility to the human race. Manners are of more importance than laws. Upon them, in a great measure, the laws depend. The law touches us but here and there, and now and then. Manners are what vex or sooth, corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarise or refine us, by a constant, steady, uniform, insensible operation, like that of the air we breathe in. They give their whole form and colour to our lives. According to their quality, they aid morals, they supply them, or they totally destroy them. Of this the new French legislators were aware; therefore, with the same method, and under the same authority, they settled a system of manners, the most licentious, prostitute, and abandoned that ever has been known, and at the same time the most coarse, rude, savage, and ferocious. Nothing in the revolution, no, not to a phrase or a gesture, not to the fashion of a hat or a shoe, was left to accident. All has been the result of design; all has been matter of institution. No mechanical means could be devised in favour of this incredible system of wickedness and vice, that has not been employed. The noblest passions, the love of glory, the love of country, have been debauched into means of its preservation and its propagation. All sorts of shews and exhibitions, calculated to inflame and vitiate the imagination, and pervert the moral sense, have been contrived. They have sometimes brought forth five or six hundred

hundred drunken women, calling at the bar of the assembly for the blood of their own children, as being royalists or constitutionalists. Sometimes they have got a body of wretches, calling themselves fathers, to demand the murder of their sons, boasting that Rome had but one Brutus, but that they could shew five hundred. There were instances, in which they inverted, and retaliated the impiety, and produced sons, who called for the execution of their parents. The foundation of their republick is laid in moral paradoxes. Their patriotism is always prodigy. All those instances to be found in history, whether real or fabulous, of a doubtful publick spirit, at which morality is perplexed, reason is staggered, and from which affrighted nature recoils, are their chosen, and almost sole examples for the instruction of their youth.

The whole drift of their institution is contrary to that of the wise legislators of all countries, who aimed at improving instincts into morals, and at grafting the virtues on the stock of the natural affections. They, on the contrary, have omitted no pains to eradicate every benevolent and noble propensity in the mind of men. In their culture it is a rule always to graft virtues on vices. They think every thing unworthy of the name of publick virtue, unless it indicates violence on the private. All their new institutions, (and with them every thing is new) strike at the root of our social

nature.

excluded; and accordingly some hundreds of years passed, without a single example of that kind. When manners were corrupted, the laws were relaxed; as the latter always follow the former, when they are not able to regulate them, or to vanquish them. Of this circumstance the legislators of vice and crime were pleased to take notice, as an inducement to adopt their regulation; holding out an hope, that the permission would as rarely be made use of. They knew the contrary to be true; and they had taken good care, that the laws should be well seconded by the manners. Their law of divorce, like all their laws, had not for its object the relief of domestick uneasiness, but the total corruption of all morals, the total disconnexion of social life.

It is a matter of curiosity to observe the operation of this encouragement to disorder. I have before me the Paris paper, correspondent to the usual register of births, marriages, and deaths. Divorce, happily, is no regular head of registry amongst civilised nations. With the jacobins it is remarkable, that divorce is not only a regular head, but it has the post of honour. It occupies the first place in the list. In the three first months of the year 1793, the number of divorces in that city amounted to 562. The marriages were 1785; so that the proportion of divorces to marriages was not much less than one to three; a thing unexampled,

unexampled, I believe, among mankind. I caused an inquiry to be made at Doctor's Commons, concerning the number of divorces; and found, that all the divorces, (which, except by special act of parliament, are separations, and not proper divorces) did not amount in all those courts, and in an hundred years, to much more than one fifth of those that passed, in the single city of Paris, in three months. I followed up the inquiry relative to that city through several of the subsequent months until I was tired, and found the proportions still the same. Since then I have heard that they have declared for a revisal of these laws: but I know of nothing done. It appears as if the contract that renovates the world was under no law at all. From this we may take our estimate of the havock that has been made through all the relations of life. With the jacobins of France, vague intercourse is without reproach; marriage is reduced to the vilest concubinage; children are encouraged to cut the throats of their parents; mothers are taught that tenderness is no part of their character; and to demonstrate their attachment to their party, that they ought to make no scruple to rake with their bloody hands in the bowels of those who came from their own.

To all this let us join the practice of *cannibalism*, with which, in the proper terms, and with

the greatest truth, their several factions accuse each other. By cannibalism, I mean their devouring, as a nutriment of their ferocity, some part of the bodies of those they have murdered; their drinking the blood of their victims, and forcing the victims themselves to drink the blood of their kindred slaughtered before their faces. By cannibalism, I mean also to signify all their nameless, unmanly, and abominable insults on the bodies of those they slaughter.

As to those whom they suffer to die a natural death, they do not permit them to enjoy the last consolations of mankind, or those rights of sepulture, which indicate hope, and which mere nature has taught to mankind in all countries, to soothe the afflictions, and to cover the infirmity of mortal condition. They disgrace men in the entry into life: they vitiate and enslave them through the whole course of it; and they deprive them of all comfort at the conclusion of their dishonoured and depraved existence. Endeavouring to persuade the people that they are no better than beasts, the whole body of their institution tends to make them beasts of prey, furious and savage. For this purpose the active part of them is disciplined into a ferocity which has no parallel. To this ferocity there is joined not one of the rude, unfashioned virtues, which accompany the vices, where the

the whole are left to grow up together in the rankness of uncultivated nature. But nothing is left to nature in their systems.

The same discipline which hardens their hearts relaxes their morals. Whilst courts of justice were thrust out by revolutionary tribunals, and silent churches were only the funeral monuments of departed religion, there were no fewer than nineteen or twenty theatres, great and small, most of them kept open at the publick expence, and all of them crowded every night. Among the gaunt, hagard forms of famine and nakedness, amidst the yells of murder, the tears of affliction, and the cries of despair, the song, the dance, the mimick scene, the buffoon laughter, went on as regularly as in the gay hour of festive peace. I have it from good authority, that under the scaffold of judicial murder, and the gaping planks that poured down blood on the spectators, the space was hired out for a shew of dancing dogs. I think, without concert, we have made the very same remark on reading some of their pieces, which being written for other purposes, let us into a view of their social life. It struck us that the habits of Paris had no resemblance to the finished virtues, or to the polished vice, and elegant, though not blameless luxury, of the capital of a great empire. Their society was more like that of a den of outlaws upon a doubtful frontier; of a lewd tavern for the revels

and debauches of banditti, assassins, bravos, smugglers, and their more desperate paramours, mixed with bombastick players, the refuse and rejected offal of strolling theatres, puffing out ill-sorted verses about virtue, mixed with the licentious and blasphemous songs, proper to the brutal and hardened course of life belonging to that sort of wretches. This system of manners in itself is at war with all orderly and moral society, and is in its neighbourhood unsafe. If great bodies of that kind were any where established in a bordering territory, we should have a right to demand of their governments the suppression of such a nuisance. What are we to do if the government and the whole community is of the same description? Yet that government has thought proper to invite ours to lay by its unjust hatred, and to listen to the voice of humanity as taught by their example.

The operation of dangerous and delusive first principles obliges us to have recourse to the true ones. In the intercourse between nations, we are apt to rely too much on the instrumental part. We lay too much weight upon the formality of treaties and compacts. We do not act much more wisely when we trust to the interests of men as guarantees of their engagements. The interests frequently tear to pieces the engagements: and the passions trample upon both. Entirely to trust to either, is to disregard our own safety, or not to know

know mankind. Men are not tied to one another by papers and seals. They are led to associate by resemblances, by conformities, by sympathies. It is with nations as with individuals. Nothing is so strong a tie of amity between nation and nation as correspondence in laws, customs, manners, and habits of life. They have more than the force of treaties in themselves. They are obligations written in the heart. They approximate men to men, without their knowledge, and sometimes against their intentions. The secret, unseen, but irrefragable bond of habitual intercourse, holds them together, even when their perverse and litigious nature sets them to equivocate, scuffle, and fight about the terms of their written obligations.

As to war, if it be the means of wrong and violence, it is the sole means of justice amongst nations. Nothing can banish it from the world. They who say otherwise, intending to impose upon us, do not impose upon themselves. But it is one of the greatest objects of human wisdom to mitigate those evils which we are unable to remove. The conformity and analogy of which I speak, incapable like every thing else, of preserving perfect trust and tranquillity among men, has a strong tendency to facilitate accommodation, and to produce a generous oblivion of the rancour of their quarrels. With this similitude, peace is more of peace, and war is less of war. I will go further. There have been

been periods of time in which communities, apparently in peace with each other, have been more perfectly separated than, in latter times, many nations in Europe have been in the course of long and bloody wars. The cause must be sought in the similitude throughout Europe of religion, laws, and manners. At bottom, these are all the same. The writers on publick law have often called this *aggregate* of nations a commonwealth. They had reason. It is virtually one great state having the same basis of general law; with some diversity of provincial customs and local establishments. The nations of Europe have had the very same christian religion, agreeing in the fundamental parts, varying a little in the ceremonies and in the subordinate doctrines. The whole of the polity and œconomy of every country in Europe has been derived from the same sources. It was drawn from the old Germánick or Gothick custumary; from the feudal institutions which must be considered as an emanation from that custumary; and the whole has been improved and digested into system and discipline by the Roman law. From hence arose the several orders, with or without a monarch (which are called states) in every European country; the strong traces of which, where monarchy predominated, were never wholly extinguished or merged in despotism. In the few places where monarchy was cast off, the spirit of European monarchy was still

still left. Those countries still continued countries of states; that is, of classes, orders, and distinctions such as had before subsisted, or nearly so. Indeed the force and form of the institution called states, continued in greater perfection in those republican communities then under monarchies. From all those sources arose a system of manners and of education which was nearly similar in all this quarter of the globe; and which softened, blended, and harmonized the colours of the whole. There was little difference in the form of the universities for the education of their youth, whether with regard to faculties, to sciences, or to the more liberal and elegant kinds of erudition. From this resemblance in the modes of intercourse, and in the whole form and fashion of life, no citizen of Europe could be altogether an exile in any part of it. There was nothing more than a pleasing variety to recreate and instruct the mind; to enrich the imagination; and to meliorate the heart. When a man travelled or resided for health, pleasure, business or necessity, from his own country, he never felt himself quite abroad.

The whole body of this new scheme of manners in support of the new scheme of politicks, I consider as a strong and decisive proof of determined ambition and systematick hostility. I defy the most refining ingenuity to invent any other cause for the total departure of the jacobin republick

from

from every one of the ideas and usages, religious, legal, moral, or social, of this civilized world, and for her tearing herself from its communion with such studied violence, but from a formed resolution of keeping no terms with that world. It has not been, as has been falsely and insidiously represented, that these miscreants had only broke with their old government. They made a schism with the whole universe, and that schism extended to almost every thing great and small. For one, I wish, since it is gone thus far, that the breach had been so complete, as to make all intercourse impracticable; but partly by accident, partly by design, partly from the resistance of the matter, enough is left to preserve intercourse, whilst amity is destroyed or corrupted in its principle.

This violent breach of the community of Europe, we must conclude to have been made (even if they had not expressly declared it over and over again) either to force mankind into an adoption of their system, or to live in perpetual enmity with a community the most potent we have ever known. Can any person imagine, that in offering to mankind this desperate alternative, there is no indication of a hostile mind, because men in possession of the ruling authority are supposed to have a right to act without coercion in their own territories? As to the right of men to act any where according to their pleasure, without any moral tie, no such right

right exists. Men are never in a state of *total* independence of each other. It is not the condition of our nature: nor is it conceivable how any man can pursue a considerable course of action without its having some effect upon others: or, of course, without producing some degree of responsibility for his conduct. The *situations* in which men relatively stand produce the rules and principles of that responsibility, and afford directions to prudence in exacting it.

Distance of place does not extinguish the duties or the rights of men; but it often renders their exercise impracticable. The same circumstance of distance renders the noxious effects of an evil system in any community less pernicious. But there are situations where this difficulty does not occur; and in which, therefore, these duties are obligatory, and these rights are to be asserted. It has ever been the method of publick jurists to draw a great part of the analogies on which they form the law of nations, from the principles of law which prevail in civil community. Civil laws are not all of them merely positive. Those which are rather conclusions of legal reason, than matters of statutable provision, belong to universal equity, and are universally applicable. Almost the whole prætorian law is such. There is a *Law of Neighbourhood* which does not leave a man perfectly master on his own ground. When a neighbour sees a *new erection*,

in

in the nature of a nuisance, set up at his door, he has a right to represent it to the judge; who, on his part, has a right to order the work to be staid; or if established, to be removed. On this head the parent law is express and clear; and has made many wise provisions, which, without destroying, regulate and restrain the right of *ownership*, by the right of *vicinage*. No *innovation* is permitted that may redound, even secondarily, to the prejudice of a neighbour. The whole doctrine of that important head of prætorian law, "*De novi operis nuncia-*" *tione*," is founded on the principle, that no *new* use should be made of a man's private liberty of operating upon his private property, from whence a detriment may be justly apprehended by his neighbour. This law of denunciation is prospective. It is to anticipate what is called *damnum infectum*, or *damnum nondum factum*, that is a damage justly apprehended but not actually done. Even before it is clearly known, whether the innovation be damageable or not, the judge is competent to issue a prohibition to innovate, until the point can be determined. This prompt interference is grounded on principles favourable to both parties. It is preventive of mischief difficult to be repaired, and of ill blood difficult to be softened. The rule of law, therefore, which comes before the evil, is amongst the very best parts of equity, and justifies the promptness of the remedy; because, as it is well

observed, *Res damni infecti celeritatem desiderat et periculosa est dilatio.* This right of denunciation does not hold, when things continue, however inconveniently to the neighbourhood, according to the *antient* mode. For there is a sort of presumption against novelty, drawn out of a deep consideration of human nature and human affairs; and the maxim of jurisprudence is well laid down, *Vetustas pro lege semper habetur.*

Such is the law of civil vicinity. Now where there is no constituted judge, as between independent states there is not, the vicinage itself is the natural judge. It is, preventively, the assertor of its own rights, or remedially, their avenger. Neighbours are presumed to take cognisance of each others acts. "*Vicini, vicinorum facta presumuntur* "*scire.*" This principle, which, like the rest, is as true of nations, as of individual men, has bestowed on the grand vicinage of Europe, a duty to know, and a right to prevent, any capital innovation which may amount to the erection of a dangerous nuisance*. Of the importance of that innovation, and the mischief of that nuisance, they are, to be

* "This state of things cannot exist in France without in-
"volving all the surrounding powers in one common danger,
"without giving them the right, without imposing it on them
"as a duty, to stop the progress of an evil which attacks the
"fundamental principles by which mankind is united in civil
"society." Declaration, 29th Oct. 1793.

sure,

sure, bound to judge not litigiously: but it is in their competence to judge. They have uniformly acted on this right. What in civil society is a ground of action, in politick society is a ground of war. But the exercise of that competent jurisdiction is a matter of moral prudence. As suits in civil society, so war in the political must ever be a matter of great deliberation. It is not this or that particular proceeding, picked out here and there, as a subject of quarrel, that will do. There must be an aggregate of mischief. There must be marks of deliberation; there must be traces of design; there must be indications of malice; there must be tokens of ambition. There must be force in the body where they exist; there must be energy in the mind. When all these circumstances combined, or the important parts of them, the duty of the vicinity calls for the exercise of its competence; and the rules of prudence do not restrain, but demand it.

In describing the nuisance erected by so pestilential a manufactory, by the construction of so infamous a brothel, by digging a night-cellar for such thieves, murderers, and house-breakers, as never infested the world, I am so far from aggravating, that I have fallen infinitely short of the evil. No man who has attended to the particulars of what has been done in France, and combined them with the principles there asserted, can possibly doubt it.

When

When I compare with this great cause of nations, the trifling points of honour, the still more contemptible points of interest, the light ceremonies, and undefinable punctilios, the disputes about precedency, the lowering or the hoisting of a sail, the dealing in a hundred or two of wild cat-skins on the other side of the globe, which have often kindled up the flames of war between nations, I stand astonished at those persons, who do not feel a resentment, not more natural than politick, at the atrocious insults that this monstrous compound offers to the dignity of every nation, and who are not alarmed with what it threatens to their safety.

I have therefore been decidedly of opinion, with our declaration at Whitehall, in the beginning of this war, that the vicinage of Europe had not only a right, but an indispensable duty, and an exigent interest, to denunciate this new work before it had produced the danger we have so sorely felt, and which we shall long feel. The example of what is done by France is too important not to have a vast and extensive influence; and that example backed with its power, must bear with great force on those who are near it; especially on those who shall recognise the pretended republick on the principle upon which it now stands. It is not an old structure which you have found as it is, and are not to dispute of the original end and design with which

it

it had been so fashioned. It is a recent wrong, and can plead no prescription. It violates the rights upon which not only the community of France, but those on which all communities are founded. The principles on which they proceed are *general* principles, and are as true in England as in any other country. They who (though with the purest intentions) recognise the authority of these regicides and robbers upon principle, justify there acts, and establish them as precedents. It is a question not between France and England. It is a question between property and force. The property claims; and its claim has been allowed. The property of the nation is the nation. They who massacre, plunder, and expel the body of the proprietary, are murderers, and robbers. The state, in its essence, must be moral and just: and it may be so, though a tyrant or usurper should be accidentally at the head of it. This is a thing to be lamented: but this notwithstanding, the body of the commonwealth may remain in all its integrity and be perfectly sound in its composition. The present case is different. It is not a revolution in Government. It is not the victory of party over party. It is a destruction and decomposition of the whole society; which never can be made of right by any faction, however powerful, nor without terrible consequences to all about it, both in the act and in the example. This pretended republick is founded

in

in crimes, and exists by wrong and robbery; and wrong and robbery, far from a title to any thing, is war with mankind. To be at peace with robbery is to be an accomplice with it.

Mere locality does not constitute a body politick. Had Cade and his gang got possession of London, they would not have been the lord mayor, aldermen, and common council. The body politick of France existed in the majesty of its throne; in the dignity of its nobility; in the honour of its gentry: in the sanctity of its clergy; in the reverence of its magistracy; in the weight and consideration due to its landed property in the several bailliages; in the respect due to its moveable substance represented by the corporations of the kingdom. All these particular *moleculæ* united, form the great mass of what is truly the body politick in all countries. They are so many deposits and receptacles of justice; because they can only exist by justice. Nation is a moral essence, not a geographical arrangement, or a denomination of the nomenclator. France, though out of her territorial possession, exists; because the sole possible claimant, I mean the proprietary, and the government to which the proprietary adheres, exists and claims. God forbid, that if you were expelled from your house by ruffians and assassins, that I should call the material walls, doors and windows of ———, the antient and honourable family of ———. Am I to transfer to the intruders, who, not

not content to turn you out naked to the world, would rob you of your very name; all the esteem and respect I owe to you? The regicides in France are not France. France is out of her bounds, but the kingdom is the same.

To illustrate my opinions on this subject, let us suppose a case, which, after what has happened, we cannot think absolutely impossible, through the augury is to be abominated, and the event deprecated with our most ardent prayers. Let us suppose then, that our gracious sovereign was sacrilegiously murdered; his exemplary queen, at the head of the matronage of this land, murdered in the same manner; that those princesses whose beauty and modest elegance are the ornaments of the country, and who are the leaders and patterns of the ingenuous youth of their sex, were put to a cruel and ignominious death, with hundreds of others, mothers and daughters, ladies of the first distinction;—that the prince of Wales and the duke of York, princes the hope and pride of the nation, with all their brethren, were forced to fly from the knives of assassins—that the whole body of our excellent clergy were either massacred or robbed of all, and transported—the Christian religion, in all its denominations, forbidden and persecuted; the law totally, fundamentally, and in all its parts destroyed—the judges put to death by revolutionary tribunals—the peers and commons robbed to the last acre of their estates; massacred

if

exile and in beggary—that the whole landed property should share the very same fate—that every military and naval officer of honour and rank, almost to a man, should be placed in the same description of confiscation and exile—that the principal merchants and bankers should be drawn out, as from an hen-coop, for slaughter—that the citizens of our greatest and most flourishing cities, when the hand and the machinery of the hangman were not found sufficient, should have been collected in the public squares, and massacred by thousands with cannon;—if three hundred thousand others should have been doomed to a situation worse than death in noisome and pestilential prisons;—in such a case, is it in the faction of robbers I am to look for my country? Would this be the England that you and I, and even strangers, admired, honoured, loved, and cherished? Would not the exiles of England alone be my government and my fellow citizens? Would not their places of refuge be my temporary country? Would not all my duties and all my affections be there and there only? Should I consider myself as a traitor to my country, and deserving of death, if I knocked at the door and heart of every potentate in Christendom to succour my friends, and to avenge them on their enemies? Could I, in any way, shew myself more a patriot? What should I think of those potentates who insulted their suffering brethren; who

treated them as vagrants, or at least as mendicants; and could find no allies, no friends, but in regicide murderers and robbers? What ought I to think and feel, if being geographers instead of kings, they recognised the desolated cities, the wasted fields, and the rivers polluted with blood, of this geometrical measurement, as the honourable member of Europe, called England? In that condition what should we think of Sweden, Denmark, or Holland, or whatever power afforded us a churlish and treacherous hospitality, if they should invite us to join the standard of our king, our laws, and our religion, if they should give us a direct promise of protection—if after all this, taking advantage of our deplorable situation, which left us no choice, they were to treat us as the lowest and vilest of all mercenaries? If they were to send us far from the aid of our king, and our suffering country, to squander us away in the most pestilential climates for a venal enlargement of their own territories, for the purpose of trucking them, when obtained, with those very robbers and murderers they had called upon us to oppose with our blood? What would be our sentiments, if in that miserable service we were not to be considered either as English, or as Swedes, Dutch, Danes, but as outcasts of the human race? Whilst we were fighting those battles of their interest, and as their soldiers, how should we feel if we were to be excluded from

all

all their cartels? How must we feel, if the pride and flower of the English nobility and gentry, who might escape the pestilential clime, and the devouring sword, should, if taken prisoners, be delivered over as rebel subjects, to be condemned as rebels, as traitors, as the vilest of all criminals, by tribunals formed of Maroon negro slaves, covered over with the blood of their masters, who were made free and organized into judges, for their robberies and murders? What should we feel under this inhuman, insulting, and barbarous protection of Muscovites, Swedes or Hollanders? Should we not obtest Heaven, and whatever justice there is yet on earth? Oppression makes wise men mad; but the distemper is still the madness of the wise, which is better than the sobriety of fools. The cry is the voice of sacred misery, exalted, not into wild raving, but into the sanctified phrenzy of prophecy and inspiration—in that bitterness of soul, in that indignation of suffering virtue, in that exaltation of despair, would not persecuted English loyalty cry out, with an awful warning voice, and denounce the destruction that waits on monarchs, who consider fidelity to them as the most degrading of all vices; who suffer it to be punished as the most abominable of all crimes; and who have no respect but for rebels, traitors, regicides, and furious negro slaves, whose crimes have broke their chains? Would not this warm language of high indigna-

tion have more of sound reason in it, more of real affection, more of true attachment, than all the lullabies of flatterers, who would hush monarchs to sleep in the arms of death? Let them be well convinced, that if ever this example should prevail in its whole extent, it will have its full operation. Whilst kings stand firm on their base, though under that base there is a sure-wrought mine, there will not be wanting to their levees a single person of those who are attached to their fortune, and not to their persons or cause: but hereafter none will support a tottering throne. Some will fly for fear of being crushed under the ruin; some will join in making it. They will seek in the destruction of royalty, fame, and power, and wealth, and the homage of kings, with *Reubel*, with *Carnot*, with *Revelliere*, and with the *Merlins* and the *Talliens*, rather than suffer exile and beggary with the *Condés*, or the *Broglios*, the *Castries*, the *D'Avrais*, the *Serrents*, the *Cazalés*, and the long line of loyal, suffering patriot nobility, or to be butchered with the oracles and the victims of the laws, the *D'Ormesons*, the *D'Espremenils*, and the *Malesherbes*. This example we shall give, if instead of adhering to our fellows in a cause which is an honour to us all, we abandon the lawful government and lawful corporate body of France, to hunt for a shameful and ruinous fraternity, with this odious usurpation that disgraces civilized society and the human race.

And

And is then example nothing? It is every thing. Example is the school of mankind, and they will learn at no other. This war is a war against that example. It is not a war for Louis the eighteenth, or even for the property, virtue, fidelity of France. It is a war for George the third, for Francis the second, and for all the dignity, property, honour, virtue, and religion of England, of Germany, and of all nations.

I know that all I have said of the systematick unsociability of this new-invented species of republick, and the impossibility of preserving peace, is answered by asserting that the scheme of manners, morals, and even of maxims and principles of state, is of no weight in a question of peace or war between communities. This doctrine is supported by example. The case of Algiers is cited, with an hint, as if it were the stronger case. I should take no notice of this sort of inducement, if I had found it only where first it was. I do not want respect for those from whom I first heard it—but having no controversy at present with them, I only think it not amiss to rest on it a little, as I find it adopted with much more of the same kind, by several of those on whom such reasoning had formerly made no apparent impression. If it had no force to prevent us from submitting to this necessary war, it furnishes no better ground for our making an unnecessary and ruinous peace.

This

This analogical argument drawn from the case of Algiers would lead us a good way. The fact is, we ourselves with a little cover, others more directly, pay a *tribute* to the republick of Algiers. Is it meant to reconcile us to the payment of a *tribute* to the French republick? That this, with other things more ruinous, will be demanded hereafter, I little doubt; but for the present, this will not be avowed—though our minds are to be gradually prepared for it. In truth, the arguments from this case are worth little, even to those who approve the buying an Algerine forbearance of piracy. There are many things which men do not approve, that they must do to avoid a greater evil. To argue from thence, that they are to act in the same manner in all cases, is turning necessity into a law. Upon what is matter of prudence, the argument concludes the contrary way. Because we have done one humiliating act, we ought, with infinite caution, to admit more acts of the same nature, lest humiliation should become our habitual state. Matters of prudence are under the dominion of circumstances, and not of logical analogies. It is absurd to take it otherwise.

I, for one, do more than doubt the policy of this kind of convention with Algiers. On those who think as I do, the argument *ad hominem* can make no sort of impression. I know something of the constitution and composition of this very extraordi-

nary

nary republick. It has a constitution, I admit, similar to the present tumultuous military tyranny of France, by which an handful of obscure ruffians domineer over a fertile country, and a brave people. For the composition, too, I admit the Algerine community resembles that of France; being formed out of the very scum, scandal, disgrace, and pest of the Turkish Asia. The grand seignior, to disburthen the country, suffers the dey to recruit, in his dominions, the corps of janisaries, or asaphs, which form the directory and council of elders of the African republick one and indivisible. But notwithstanding this resemblance, which I allow, I never shall so far injure the janisarian republick of Algiers, as to put it in comparison for every sort of crime, turpitude, and oppression with the jacobin republick of Paris. There is no question with me to which of the two I should choose to be a neighbour or a subject. But situated as I am, I am in no danger of becoming to Algiers either the one or the other. It is not so in my relation to the atheistical fanaticks of France. I *am* their neighbour; I *may* become their subject. Have the gentlemen who borrowed this happy parallel, no idea of the different conduct to be held with regard to the very same evil at an immense distance, and when it is at your door? when its power is enormous, as when it is comparatively as feeble as its distance is remote? when there is a barrier of

language

language and usages, which prevents corruption through certain old correspondences and habitudes, from the contagion of the horrible novelties that are introduced into every thing else? I can contemplate, without dread, a royal or a national tyger on the borders of Pegu. I can look at him, with an easy curiosity, as prisoner within bars in the menagerie of the tower. But if, by habeas corpus, or otherwise, he was to come into the lobby of the house of commons whilst your door was open, any of you would be more stout than wise, who would not gladly make your escape out of the back windows. I certainly should dread more from a wild cat in my bed-chamber, than from all the lions that roar in the desarts behind Algiers. But in this parallel it is the cat that is at a distance, and the lions and tygers that are in our anti-chambers and our lobbies. Algiers is not near; Algiers is not powerful; Algiers is not our neighbour; Algiers is not infectious. Algiers, whatever it may be, is an old creation; and we have good data to calculate all the mischief to be apprehended from it. When I find Algiers transferred to Calais, I will tell you what I think of that point. In the mean time, the case quoted from the Algerine reports, will not apply as authority. We shall put it out of court; and so far as that goes, let the counsel for the jacobin peace take nothing by their motion.

When we voted, as you and I did, with many more

more whom you and I respect and love, to resist this enemy, we were providing for dangers that were direct, home, pressing, and not remote, contingent, uncertain, and formed upon loose analogies. We judged of the danger with which we were menaced by jacobin France, from the whole tenour of her conduct; not from one or two doubtful or detached acts or expressions. I not only concurred in the idea of combining with Europe in this war; but to the best of my power even stimulated ministers to that conjunction of interests and of efforts. I joined them with all my soul, on the principles contained in that manly and masterly state-paper, which I have two or three times referred to*, and may still more frequently hereafter. The diplomatick collection never was more enriched than with this piece. The historick facts justify every stroke of the master, "Thus painters write their names "at Co."

Various persons may concur in the same measure on various grounds. They may be various, without being contrary to, or exclusive of each other. I thought the insolent, unprovoked aggression of the regicide, upon our ally of Holland, a good ground of war. I think his manifest attempt to overturn the balance of Europe, a good ground of war. As a good ground of war, I consider his

* Declaration, Whitehall Oct. 29, 1792.

declaration

mouth of legal authority, is, I may fairly say, irresistible.

I admit that reason of state will not, in many circumstances, permit the disclosure of the true ground of a publick proceeding. In that case silence is manly and it is wise. It is fair to call for trust when the principle of reason itself suspends its publick use. I take the distinction to be this: The ground of a particular measure, making a part of a plan, it is rarely proper to divulge; all the broader grounds of policy on which the general plan is to be adopted, ought as rarely to be concealed. They who have not the whole cause before them, call them politicians, call them people, call them what you will, are no judges. The difficulties of the case, as well as its fair side, ought to be presented. This ought to be done; and it is all that can be done. When we have our true situation distinctly presented to us, if then we resolve with a blind and headlong violence, to resist the admonitions of our friends, and to cast ourselves into the hands of our potent and irreconcileable foes, then, and not till then, the ministers stand acquitted before God and man, for whatever may come.

Lamenting as I do, that the matter has not had so full and free a discussion as it requires, I mean to omit none of the points which seem to me necessary

cessary for consideration, previous to an arrangement which is for ever to decide the form and the fate of Europe. In the course, therefore, of what I shall have the honour to address to you, I propose the following questions to your serious thought:—1. Whether the present system which stands for a government in France, be such as to peace and war affects the neighbouring states in a manner different from the internal government that formerly prevailed in that country?—2. Whether that system, supposing its views hostile to other nations, possesses any means of being hostile to them peculiar to itself?—3. Whether there has been lately such a change in France, as to alter the nature of its system, or its effect upon other powers?—4. Whether any publick declarations or engagements exist, on the part of the allied powers, which stand in the way of a treaty of peace, which supposes the right and confirms the power of the regicide faction in France?—5. What the state of the other powers of Europe will be with respect to each other, and their colonies, on the conclusion of a regicide peace?—6. Whether we are driven to the absolute necessity of making that kind of peace?

These heads of inquiry will enable us to make the application of the several matters of fact and topicks of argument, that occur in this vast discussion, to certain fixed principles. I do not mean

mean to confine myself to the order in which they stand. I shall discuss them in such a manner as shall appear to me the best adapted for shewing their mutual bearings and relations. Here then I chose the publick matter of my letter; but before I have done, let me say one word in apology for myself.

In wishing this nominal peace not to be precipitated, I am sure no man living is less disposed to blame the present ministry than I am. Some of my oldest friends, (and I wish I could say it of more of them) make a part in that ministry. There are some indeed, "whom my dim eyes in vain ex-"plore." In my mind, a greater calamity could not have fallen on the publick than the exclusion of one of them. But I drive away that, with other melancholy thoughts. A great deal ought to be said upon that subject or nothing. As to the distinguished persons to whom my friends who remain are joined, if the benefits, nobly and generously conferred, ought to procure good wishes, they are entitled to my best vows; and they have them all. They have administered to me the only consolation I am capable of receiving, which is to know that no individual will suffer by my thirty years service to the public. If things should give us the comparative happiness of a struggle, I shall be found, I was going to say fighting, (that would be foolish) but dying by the side of Mr. Pitt. I must add,

that

that if any thing defensive in our domestick system can possibly save us from the disasters of a regicide peace, he is the man to save us If the finances in such a case can be repaired, he is the man to repair them. If I should lament any of his acts, it is only when they appear to me to have no resemblance to acts of his. But let him not have a confidence in himself, which no human abilities can warrant. His abilities are fully equal (and that is to say much for any man) to those which are opposed to him. But if we look to him as our security against the consequences of a regicide peace, let us be assured, that a regicide peace and a constitutional ministry are terms that will not agree. With a regicide peace the king cannot long have a minister to serve him, nor the minister a king to serve. If the Great Disposer, in reward of the royal and the private virtues of our sovereign, should call him from the calamitous spectacles, which will attend a state of amity with regicide, his successor will surely see them, unless the same Providence greatly anticipates the course of nature. Thinking thus (and not, as I conceive, on light grounds) I dare not flatter the reigning sovereign, nor any minister he has or can have, nor his successor apparent, nor any of those who may be called to serve him, with what appears to me a false state of their situation. We cannot have them and that peace together.

I do

I do not forget that there had been a considerable difference between several of our friends, (with my insignificant self) and the great man at the head of ministry, in an early stage of these discussions. But I am sure there was a period in which we agreed better in the danger of a jacobin existence in France, At one time he and all Europe seem to feel it. But why am not I converted with so many great powers, and so many great ministers? It is because I am old and slow.—I am in this year, 1796, only where all the powers of Europe were in 1793. I cannot move with this precession of the equinoxes, which is preparing for us the return of some very old, I am afraid no golden æra, or the commencement of some new æra that must be denominated from some new metal. In this crisis I must hold my tongue, or I must speak with freedom. Falshood and delusion are allowed in no case whatever: but as in the exercise of all the virtues, there is an œconomy of truth. It is a sort of temperance, by which a man speaks truth with measure that he may speak it the longer. But as the same rules do not hold in all cases—what would be right for you, who may presume on a series of years before you, would have no sense for me, who cannot, without absurdity, calculate on six months of life. What I say, I *must* say at once. Whatever I write is in its nature testamentary. It may have the weakness but it has the sincerity of

a dying declaration. For the few days I have to linger here, I am removed completely from the busy scene of the world; but I hold myself to be still responsible for every thing that I have done whilst I continued on the place of action. If the rawest Tyro in politicks has been influenced by the authority of my grey hairs, and led by any thing in my speeches, or my writings, to enter into this war, he has a right to call upon me to know why I have changed my opinions, or why, when those I voted with, have adopted better notions, I persevere in exploded errour?

When I seem not to acquiesce in the acts of those I respect in every degree short of superstition, I am obliged to give my reasons fully. I cannot set my authority against their authority. But to exert reason is not to revolt against authority. Reason and authority do not move in the same parallel. That reason is an *amicus curiæ* who speaks *de plano*, not *pro tribunali*. It is a friend who makes an useful suggestion to the court, without questioning its jurisdiction. Whilst he acknowledges its competence, he promotes its efficiency. I shall pursue the plan I have chalked out in my letters that follow this.

LETTER II.

ON THE

GENIUS AND CHARACTER

OF THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION

AS IT REGARDS

OTHER NATIONS.

1796.

LETTER II.

ON THE

Genius and Character of the French Revolution as it regards other Nations.

MY DEAR SIR,

I CLOSED my first letter with serious matter, and I hope it has employed your thoughts. The system of peace must have a reference to the system of the war. On that ground, I must therefore again recal your mind to our original opinions, which time and events have not taught me to vary.

My ideas and my principle led me, in this contest, to encounter France, not as a state, but as a faction. The vast territorial extent of that country, its immense population, its riches of production, its riches of commerce and convention—the whole aggregate mass of what, in ordinary cases, constitutes the force of a state, to me were but objects of secondary consideration. They might be balanced; and they have been often more than balanced. Great as these things are, they are not what make the faction formidable. It is the

the faction that makes them truly dreadful. That faction is the evil spirit that possesses the body of France; that informs it as a soul; that stamps upon its ambition, and upon all its pursuits, a characteristick mark, which strongly distinguishes them from the same general passions, and the same general views, in other men and in other communities. It is that spirit which inspires into them, a new, a pernicious, a desolating activity. Constituted as France was ten years ago, it was not in that France to shake, to shatter, and to overwhelm Europe in the manner that we behold. A sure destruction impends over those infatuated princes, who, in the conflict with this new and unheard-of power, proceed as if they were engaged in a war that bore a resemblance to their former contests; or that they can make peace in the spirit of their former arrangements of pacification. Here the beaten path is the very reverse of the safe road.

As to me, I was always steadily of opinion, that this disorder was not in its nature intermittent. I conceived that the contest once begun, could not be laid down again, to be resumed at our discretion; but that our first struggle with this evil would also be our last. I never thought we could make peace with the system; because it was not for the sake of an object we pursued in rivalry with each other, but with the system itself that we were at war. As I understood the matter, we were at

war

war not with its conduct, but with its existence; convinced that its existence and its hostility were the same.

The faction is not local or territorial. It is a general evil. Where it least appears in action, it is still full of life. In its sleep it recruits its strength, and prepares its exertion. Its spirit lies deep in the corruption of our common nature. The social order which restrains it, feeds it. It exists in every country in Europe; and among all orders of men in every country, who look up to France as to a common head. The centre is there. The circumference is the world of Europe wherever the race of Europe may be settled. Every where else the faction is militant; in France it is triumphant. In France is the bank of deposit, and the bank of circulation, of all the pernicious principles that are forming in every state. It will be a folly scarcely deserving of pity, and too mischievous for contempt, to think of restraining it in any other country whilst it is predominant there. War, instead of being the cause of its force, has suspended its operation. It has given a reprieve, at least to the christian world.

The true nature of a jacobin war, in the beginning, was, by most of the Christian powers, felt, acknowledged, and even in the most precise manner declared. In the joint manifesto, published by the emperour and the king of Prussia, on the 4th of

of August 1792, it is expressed in the clearest terms, and on principles, which could not fail, if they had adhered to them, of classing those monarchs with the first benefactors of mankind. This manifesto was published, as they themselves express it, "to lay open to the present generation, as well as "to posterity, their motives, their intentions, and "the *disinterestedness* of their personal views; tak-"ing up arms for the purpose of preserving social "and political order amongst all civilized nations, "and to secure to *each* state its religion, happi-"ness, independence, territories, and real con-"stitution."—"On this ground, they hoped that "all empires, and all states would be unani-"mous; and becoming the firm guardians of "the happiness of mankind, that they could not "fail to unite their efforts to rescue a numerous "nation from its own fury, to preserve Europe "from the return of barbarism, and the universe "from the subversion and anarchy with which it "was threatened." The whole of that noble performance ought to be read at the first meeting of any congress, which may assemble for the purpose of pacification. In that piece "these powers ex-"pressly renounce all views of personal aggran-"dizement," and confine themselves to objects worthy of so generous, so heroick, and so perfectly wise and politick an enterprise. It was to the principles of this confederation and to no other, that

we

we wished our sovereign and our country to accede, as a part of the commonwealth of Europe. To these principles with some trifling exceptions and limitations they did fully accede *. And all our friends who took office acceded to the ministry (whether wisely or not) as I always understood the matter, on the faith and on the principles of that declaration.

As long as these powers flattered themselves that the menace of force would produce the effect of force, they acted on those declarations: but when their menaces failed of success, their efforts took a new direction. It did not appear to them that virtue and heroism ought to be purchased by millions of rix-dollars. It is a dreadful truth, but it is a truth that cannot be concealed; in ability, in dexterity, in the distinctness of their views, the jacobins are our superiours. They saw the thing right from the very beginning. Whatever were the first motives to the war among politicians, they saw that in its spirit, and for its objects, it was a *civil war*; and as such they pursued it. It is a war between the partisans of the antient, civil, moral, and political order of Europe against a sect of fanatical and ambitious atheists which means to change them all. It is not France extending a foreign empire over other nations: it is a sect aiming at universal empire, and beginning with the conquest of France.

* See Declaration, Whitehall, October 29, 1793.

The

The leaders of that sect secured the *centre of Europe;* and that secured, they knew, that whatever might be the event of battles and sieges, their *cause* was victorious. Whether its territory had a little more or a little less peeled from its surface, or whether an island or two was detached from its commerce, to them was of little moment. The conquest of France was a glorious acquisition. That once well laid as a basis of empire, opportunities never could be wanting to regain or to replace what had been lost, and dreadfully to avenge themselves on the faction of their adversaries.

They saw it was a *civil war*. It was their business to persuade their adversaries that it ought to be a *foreign* war. The jacobins every where set up a cry against the new crusade; and they intrigued with effect in the cabinet, in the field, and in every private society in Europe. Their task was not difficult. The condition of princes, and sometimes of first ministers too, is to be pitied. The creatures of the desk, and the creatures of favour, had no relish for the principles of the manifestoes. They promised no governments, no regiments, no revenues from whence emoluments might arise, by perquisite or by grant. In truth, the tribe of vulgar politicians are the lowest of our species. There is no trade so vile and mechanical as government in their hands. Virtue is not their habit. They are out of themselves in any course of conduct recommended

only

only by conscience and glory. A large, liberal and prospective view of the interests of states passes with them for romance; and the principles that recommend it for the wanderings of a disordered imagination. The calculators compute them out of their senses. The jesters and buffoons shame them out of every thing grand and elevated. Littleness in object and in means, to them appears soundness and sobriety. They think there is nothing worth pursuit, but that which they can handle; which they can measure with a two-foot rule; which they can tell upon ten fingers.

Without the principles of the jacobins, perhaps without any principles at all, they played the game of that faction. There was a beaten road before them. The powers of Europe were armed; France had always appeared dangerous; the war was easily diverted from France as a faction, to France as a state. The princes were easily taught to slide back into their old habitual course of politicks. They were easily led to consider the flames that were consuming France, not as a warning to protect their own buildings (which were without any party wall, and linked by a contignation into the edifice of France,) but as an happy occasion for pillaging the goods, and for carrying off the materials of their neighbour's house. Their provident fears were changed into avaricious hopes. They carried on their new designs without seeming to abandon the principles

principles of their old policy. They pretended to seek or they flattered themselves that they sought, in the accession of new fortresses, and new territories, a *defensive* security. But the security wanted was against a kind of power, which was not so truly dangerous in its fortresses nor in its territories, as in its spirit and its principles. They aimed, or pretended to aim, at *defending* themselves against a danger, from which there can be no security in any *defensive* plan. If armies and fortresses were a defence against jacobinism, Louis the Sixteenth would this day reign a powerful monarch over an happy people.

This errour obliged them, even in their offensive operations, to adopt a plan of war, against the success of which there was something little short of mathematical demonstration. They refused to take any step which might strike at the heart of affairs. They seemed unwilling to wound the enemy in any vital part. They acted through the whole, as if they really wished the conservation of the jacobin power; as what might be more favourable than the lawful government to the attainment of the petty objects they looked for. They always kept on the circumference; and the wider and remoter the circle was, the more eagerly they chose it as their sphere of action in this centrifugal war. The plan they pursued, in its nature demanded great length of time. In its execution, they, who

went

went the nearest way to work, were obliged to cover an incredible extent of country. It left to the enemy every means of destroying this extended line of weakness. Ill success in any part was sure to defeat the effect of the whole. This is true of Austria. It is still more true of England. On this false plan, even good fortune, by further weakening the victor, put him but the further off from his object.

As long as there was any appearance of success, the spirit of aggrandizement, and consequently the spirit of mutual jealousy, seized upon all the coalesced powers, Some sought an accession of territory at the expence of France, some at the expence of each other; some at the expence of third parties; and when the vicissitude of disaster took its turn, they found common distress a treacherous bond of faith and friendship.

The greatest skill conducting the greatest military apparatus has been employed; but it has been worse than uselessly employed, through the false policy of the war. The operations ofthe field suffered by the errours of the cabinet. If the same spirit continues when peace is made, the peace will fix and perpetuate all the errours of the war; because it will be made upon the same false principle. What has been lost in the field, in the field may be regained. An arrangement of peace in its nature is a permanent settlement; it is the effect of counsel

counsel and deliberation, and not of fortuitous events. If built upon a basis fundamentally erroneous, it can only be retrieved by some of those unforeseen dispensations, which the all-wise but mysterious Governour of the world, sometimes interposes, to snatch nations from ruin. It would not be pious errour, but mad and impious presumption for any one to trust in an unknown order of dispensations, in defiance of the rules of prudence, which are formed upon the known march of the ordinary providence of God.

It was not of that sort of war that I was amongst the least considerable, but amongst the most zealous advisers; and it is not by the sort of peace now talked of, that I wish it concluded. It would answer no great purpose to enter into the particular errours of the war. The whole has been but one errour. It was but nominally a war of alliance. As the combined powers pursued it, there was nothing to hold an alliance together. There could be no tie of *honour*, in a society for pillage. There could be no tie of a common *interest* were the object did not offer such a division amongst the parties, as could well give them a warm concern in the gains of each other, or could indeed form such a body of equivalents, as might make one of them willing to abandon a separate object of his ambition for the gratification of any other member of the alliance. The partition of Poland offered an object of spoil in which

which the parties *might* agree. They were circumjacent; and each might take a portion convenient to his own territory. They might dispute about the value of their several shares, but the contiguity to each of the demandants always furnished the means of an adjustment. Though hereafter the world will have cause to rue this iniquitous measure, and they most who were most concerned in it, for the moment, there was wherewithal in the object to preserve peace amongst confederates in wrong. But the spoil of France did not afford the same facilities for accommodation. What might satisfy the house of Austria in a Flemish frontier afforded no equivalent to tempt the cupidity of the king of Prussia. What might be desired by Great Britain in the West Indies, must be coldly and remotely, if at all, felt as an interest at Vienna; and it would be felt as something worse than a negative interest at Madrid. Austria, long possessed with unwise and dangerous designs on Italy, could not be very much in earnest about the conservation of the old patrimony of the house of Savoy: and Sardinia, who owed to an Italian force all her means of shutting out France from Italy, of which she has been supposed to hold the key, would not purchase the means of strength upon one side by yielding it on the other. She would not readily give the possession of Novara for the hope of Savoy. No continental power was willing to lose any of its con-

tinential objects for the increase of the naval power of Great Britain; and Great Britain would not give up any of the objects she sought for as the means of an increase to her naval power, to further their aggrandizement.

The moment this war came to be considered as a war merely of profit, the actual circumstances are such, that it never could become really a war of alliance. Nor can the peace be a peace of alliance, until things are put upon their right bottom.

I don't find it denied, that when a treaty is entered into for peace, a demand will be made on the regicides to surrender a great part of their conquests on the continent. Will they, in the present state of the war, make that surrender without an equivalent? This continental cession must of course be made in favour of that party in the alliance, that has suffered losses. That party has nothing to furnish towards an equivalent. What equivalent, for instance, has Holland to offer, who has lost her all? What equivalent can come from the Emperor, every part of whose territories contiguous to France, is already within the pale of the regicide dominions? What equivalent has Sardinia to offer for Savoy and for Nice, I may say for her whole being? What has she taken from the faction of France? she has lost very near her all; and she has gained nothing. What equivalent has

Spain

Spain to give? Alas! she has already paid for her own ransom the fund of equivalent, and a dreadful equivalent it is, to England and to herself. But I put Spain out of the question; she is a province of the jacobin empire, and she must make peace or war according to the orders she receives from the directory of assassins. In effect and substance, her crown is a fief of regicide.

Whence then can the compensation be demanded? Undoubtedly from that power which alone has made some conquests. That power is England. Will the allies then give away their antient patrimony, that England may keep islands in the West Indies? They never can protract the war in good earnest for that object; nor can they act in concert with us, in our refusal to grant any thing towards their redemption. In that case we are thus situated. Either we must give Europe, bound hand and foot, to France; or we must quit the West Indies without any one object, great or small, towards indemnity and security. I repeat it without any advantage whatever: because, supposing that our conquest could comprise all that France ever possessed in the tropical America, it never can amount in any fair estimation to a fair equivalent for Holland, for the Austrian Netherlands, for the lower Germany, that is for the whole antient kingdom or circle of Burgundy, now under the yoke of regicide, to say nothing of almost all Italy under

the same barbarous domination. If we treat in the present situation of things, we have nothing in our hands that can redeem Europe. Nor is the emperour, as I have observed, more rich in the fund of equivalents.

If we look to our stock in the eastern world, our most valuable and systematick acquisitions are made in that quarter. It is from France they are made? France has but one or two contemptible factories, subsisting by the offal of the private fortunes of English individuals to support them, in any part of India. I look on the taking of the Cape of Good Hope as the securing of a post of great moment. It does honour to those who planned, and to those who executed that enterprise: but I speak of it always as comparatively good; as good as any thing can be in a scheme of war that repels us from a centre, and employs all our forces where nothing can be finally decisive. But giving, as I freely give, every possible credit to these eastern conquests, I ask one question, on whom are they made? It is evident, that if we can keep our eastern conquests, we keep them not at the expence of France, but at the expence of Holland our *ally;* of Holland the immediate cause of the war, the nation whom we had undertaken to protect, and not of the republick which it was our business to destroy. If we return the African and the Asiatick conquests, we put them into the hands

of

of a nominal state (to that Holland is reduced) unable to retain them; and which will virtually leave them under the direction of France. If we withhold them, Holland declines still more as a state. She loses so much carrying trade and that means of keeping up the small degree of naval power she holds; for which policy alone, and not for any commercial gain she maintains the Cape, or any settlement beyond it. In that case, resentment, faction, and even necessity will throw her more and more into the power of the new mischievous republick. But on the probable state of Holland, I shall say more, when in this correspondence I come to talk over with you the state in which any sort of jacobin peace will leave all Europe.

So far as to the East Indies.

As to the West Indies, indeed as to either, if we look for matter of exchange in order to ransom Europe, it is easy to shew that we have taken a terrible roundabout road. I cannot conceive, even if, for the sake of holding conquests there, we should refuse to redeem Holland, and the Austrian Netherlands, and the hither Germany, that Spain, merely as she is Spain (and forgetting that the regicide ambassador governs at Madrid) will see with perfect satisfaction, Great Britain sole mistress of the Isles. In truth it appears to me, that, when we come to balance our acconat, we shall find in the proposed peace only the pure, simple, and

unendowed charms of jacobin amity. We shall have the satisfaction of knowing, that no blood or treasure has been spared by the allies for support of the regicide system. We shall reflect at leisure on one great truth, that it was ten times more easy totally to destroy the system itself, than when established, it would be to reduce its power, and that this republick, most formidable abroad, was, of all things, the weakest at home; that her frontier was terrible, her interiour feeble; that it was matter of choice to attack her where she is invincible, and to spare her where she was ready to dissolve by her own internal disorders. We shall reflect, that our plan was good neither for offence nor defence.

It would not be at all difficult to prove, that an army of a hundred thousand men, horse, foot, and artillery, might have been employed against the enemy on the very soil which he has usurped at a far less expence than has been squandered away upon tropical adventures. In these adventures it was not an enemy we had to vanquish, but a cemetery to conquer. In carrying on the war in the West Indies, the hostile sword is merciful; the country in which we engage is the dreadful enemy. There the European conqueror finds a cruel defeat in the very fruits of his success. Every advantage is but a new demand on England for recruits to the West Indian grave. In a West India war, the regicides have for their troops,

troops, a race of fierce barbarians, to whom the poisoned air, in which our youth inhale certain death, is salubrity and life. To them the climate is the surest and most faithful of allies.

Had we carried on the war on the side of France which looks towards the channel or the Atlantick, we should have attacked our enemy on his weak and unarmed side. We should not have to reckon on the loss of a man, who did not fall in battle. We should have an ally in the heart of the country, who to our hundred thousand, would at one time have added eighty thousand men at the least, and all animated by principle, by enthusiasm and by vengeance; motives which secured them to the cause in a very different manner from some of those allies whom we subsidized with millions. This ally (or rather this principle in the war) by the confession of the regicide himself, was more formidable to him than all his other foes united. Warring there, we should have led our arms to the capital of Wrong. Defeated, we could not fail (proper precautions taken) of a sure retreat. Stationary, and only supporting the royalists, an impenetrable barrier, an impregnable rampart would have been formed between the enemy and his naval power. We are probably the only nation who have declined to act against an enemy, when it might have been done in his own country; and who having an armed, a powerful, and a long victorious

torious ally in that country, declined all effectual co-operation, and suffered him to perish for want of support. On the plan of a war in France, every advantage that our allies might obtain, would be doubled in its effect. Disasters on the one side, might have a fair chance of being compensated by victories on the other. Had we brought the main of our force to bear upon that quarter, all the operations of the British and Imperial crowns would have been combined. The war would have had system, correspondence, and a certain direction. But as the war has been pursued, the operations of the two crowns have not the smallest degree of mutual bearing or relation.

Had acquisitions in the West Indies been our object, on success in France, every thing reasonable in those remote parts might be demanded with decorum, and justice, and a sure effect. Well might we call for a recompence in America, for those services to which Europe owed its safety. Having abandoned this obvious policy connected with principle, we have seen the regicide power taking the reverse course, and making real conquests in the West Indies, to which all our dear-bought advantages (if we could hold them) are mean and contemptible. The noblest island within the tropicks, worth all that we possess put together, is, by the vassal Spaniard, delivered into her hands. The island of Hispaniola (of which we have

have but one poor corner, by a slippery hold) is perhaps equal to England in extent, and in fertility is far superiour. The part possessed by Spain, of that great island, made for the seat and center of a tropical empire, was not improved, to be sure, as the French division had been, before it was systematically destroyed by the cannibal republick; but it is not only the far larger, but the far more salubrious, and more fertile part.

It was delivered into the hands of the barbarians without, as I can find, any publick reclamation on our part, not only in contravention to one of the fundamental treaties that compose the publick law of Europe, but in defiance of the fundamental colonial policy of Spain herself. This part of the treaty of Utrecht was made for great general ends unquestionably; but whilst it provided for those general ends, it was in affirmance of that particular policy. It was not to injure but to save Spain by making a settlement of her estate, which prohibited her to alienate to France. It is her policy, not to see the balance of West Indian power overturned by France or by Great Britain. Whilst the monarchies subsisted, this unprincipled cession was what the influence of the elder branch of the house of Bourbon never dared to attempt on the younger: but cannibal terrour has been more powerful than family influence. The Bourbon monarchy of Spain

is

is united to the republick of France, by what may be truly called the ties of blood.

By this measure the balance of power in the West Indies is totally destroyed. It has followed the balance of power in Europe. It is not alone what shall be left nominally to the assassins that is theirs. Theirs is the whole empire of Spain in America. That stroke finishes all. I should be glad to see our suppliant negotiator in the act of putting his feather to the ear of the directory, to make it unclench the fist; and by his tickling, to charm that rich prize out of the iron gripe of robbery and ambition! It does not require much sagacity to discern, that no power wholly baffled and defeated in Europe, can flatter itself with conquests in the West Indies. In that state of things it can neither keep nor hold. No! It cannot even long make war if the grand bank and deposit of its force is at all in the West Indies. But here a scene opens to my view too important to pass by, perhaps too critical to touch. Is it possible, that it should not present itself in all its relations, to a mind habituated to consider either war or peace on a large scale, or as one whole?

Unfortunately other ideas have prevailed. A remote, an expensive, a murderous, and in the end, an unproductive adventure, carried on upon ideas of mercantile knight-errantry, without any of the generous wildness of Quixotism, is considered as sound,

sound, solid sense; and a war in a wholesome climate, a war at our door, a war directly on the enemy, a war in the heart of his country, a war in concert with an internal ally, and in combination with the external, is regarded as folly and romance.

My dear friend, I hold it impossible that these considerations should have escaped the statesmen on both sides of the water, and on both sides of the house of commons. How a question of peace can be discussed without having them in view, I cannot imagine. If you or others see a way out of these difficulties I am happy. I see indeed a fund from whence equivalents will be proposed. I see it. But I cannot just now touch it. It is a question of high moment. It opens another Iliad of woes to Europe.

Such is the time proposed for making *a common political peace*, to which no one circumstance is propitious. As to the grand principle of the peace, it is left, as if by common consent, wholly out of the question.

Viewing things in this light, I have frequently sunk into a degree of despondency and dejection hardly to be described; yet out of the profoundest depths of this despair, an impulse which I have in vain endeavoured to resist, has urged me to raise one feeble cry against this unfortunate coalition which is formed at home, in order to make a coalition

objects. The changes made by that revolution were not the better to accommodate her to the old and usual relations, but to produce new ones. The revolution was made, not to make France free, but to make her formidable; not to make her a neighbour, but a mistress; not to make her more observant of laws, but to put her in a condition to impose them. To make France truly formidable it was necessary that France should be new-modelled. They who have not followed the train of the late proceedings, have been led by deceitful representations (which deceit made a part in the plan) to conceive that this totally new model of a state in which nothing escaped a change, was made with a view to its internal relations only.

In he Revolution of France two sorts of men were principally concerned in giving a character and determination to its pursuits; the philosophers and the politicians. They took different ways, but they met in the same end. The philosophers had one predominant object, which they pursued with a fanatical fury, that is, the utter extirpation of religion. To that every question of empire was subordinate. They had rather domineer in a parish of atheists, than rule over a christian world. Their temporal ambition was wholly subservient to their proselytizing spirit, in which they were not exceeded by Mahomet himself.

They

They who have made but superficial studies in the natural history of the human mind, have been taught to look on religious opinions as the only cause of enthusiastick zeal, and sectarian propagation. But there is no doctrine whatever, on which men can warm, that is not capable of the very same effect. The social nature of man impels him to propagate his principles, as much as physical impulses urge him to propagate his kind. The passions give zeal and vehemence. The understanding bestows design and system. The whole man moves under the discipline of his opinions. Religion is among the most powerful causes of enthusiasm. When any thing concerning it becomes an object of much meditation, it cannot be indifferent to the mind. They who do not love religion, hate it. The rebels to God perfectly abhor the author of their being. They hate him "with "all their heart, with all their mind, with all their "soul, and with all their strength." He never presents himself to their thoughts, but to menace and alarm them. They cannot strike the sun out of Heaven, but they are able to raise a smouldering smoke that obscures him from their own eyes. Not being able to revenge themselves on God, they have a delight in vicariously defacing, degrading, torturing and tearing in pieces his image in man. Let no one judge of them by what he has conceived of them, when they were not incorporated,

and had no lead. They were then only passengers in a common vehicle. They were then carried along with the general motion of religion in the community, and without being aware of it, partook of its influence. In that situation, at worst, their nature was left free to counterwork their principles. They despaired of giving any very general currency to their opinions. They considered them as a reserved privilege for the chosen few. But when the possibility of dominion, lead, and propagation presented themselves, and that the ambition, which before had so often made them hypocrites, might rather gain than lose by a daring avowal of their sentiments, then the nature of this infernal spirit, which has "evil for its good," appeared in its full perfection. Nothing indeed but the possession of some power can with any certainty discover, what at the bottom is the true character of any man. Without reading the speeches of Vergniaud, Français of Nantz, Isnard, and some others of that sort, it would not be easy to conceive the passion, rancour, and malice of their tongues and hearts. They worked themselves up to a perfect frenzy against religion and all its professors. They tore the reputation of the clergy to pieces by their infuriated declamations and invectives, before they lacerated their bodies by their massacres. This fanatical atheism left out, we omit the principal feature in the French revolution, and

a prin-

a principal consideration with regard to the effects to be expected from a peace with it.

The other sort of men were the politicians. To them who had little or not at all reflected on the subject, religion was in itself no object of love or hatred. They disbelieved it, and that was all. Neutral with regard to that object, they took the side which in the present state of things might best answer their purposes. They soon found that they could not do without the philosophers; and the philosophers soon made them sensible, that the destruction of religion was to supply them with means of conquest first at home, and then abroad. The philosophers were the active internal agitators, and supplied the spirit and principles: the second gave the practical direction. Sometimes the one predominated in the composition, sometimes the other. The only difference between them was in the necessity of concealing the general design for a time, and in their dealing with foreign nations; the fanaticks going straight forward and openly, the politicians by the surer mode of zigzag. In the course of events this, among other causes, produced fierce and bloody contentions between them. But at the bottom they thoroughly agreed in all the objects of ambition and irreligion, and substantially in all the means of promoting these ends.

Without question, to bring about the unexpected

pled event of the French revolution, the concurrence of a very great number of views and passions was necessary. In that stupendous work, no one principle by which the human mind may have its faculties at once invigorated and depraved, was left unemployed; but I can speak it to a certainty, and support it by undoubted proofs, that the ruling principle of those who acted in the revolution *as statesmen*, had the exterior aggrandizement of France as their ultimate end in the most minute part of the internal changes that were made. We, who of late years have been drawn from an attention to foreign affairs by the importance of our domestick discussions, cannot easily form a conception of the general eagerness of the active and energetick part of the French nation, itself the most active and energetick of all nations, previous to its revolution, upon that subject. I am convinced that the foreign speculators in France, under the old government, were twenty to one of the same description then or now in England; and few of that description there were, who did not emulously set forward the revolution. The whole official system, particularly in the diplomatick part, the regulars, the irregulars, down to the clerks in office, (a corps, without all comparison, more numerous than the same amongst us) co-operated in it. All the intriguers in foreign politicks, all the spies, all the

the intelligencers, actually or late in function, all the candidates for that sort of employment, acted solely upon that principle.

On that system of aggrandizement there was but one mind: but two violent factions arose about the means. The first wished France, diverted from the politicks of the continent, to attend solely to her marine, to feed it by an increase of commerce, and thereby to overpower England on her own element. They contended, that if England were disabled, the powers on the continent would fall into their proper subordination; that it was England which deranged the whole continental system of Europe. The others, who were by far the more numerous, though not the most outwardly prevalent at court, considered this plan for France as contrary to her genius, her situation, and her natural means. They agreed as to the ultimate object, the reduction of the British power, and, if possible, its naval power; but they considered an ascendancy on the continent as a necessary preliminary to that undertaking. They argued, that the proceedings of England herself had proved the soundness of this policy. That her greatest and ablest statesmen had not considered the support of a continental balance against France as a deviation from the principle of her naval power, but as one of the most effectual modes of carrying it into effect. That such had been her policy ever since the revolution; during

 which

which period the naval strength of Great Britain had gone on increasing in the direct ratio of her interference in the politicks of the continent. With much stronger reason ought the politicks of France to take the same direction; as well for pursuing objects which her situation would dictate to her, though England had no existence, as for counteracting the politicks of that nation; to France continental politicks are primary; they looked on them only of secondary consideration to England, and however necessary, but as means necessary to an end.

What is truly astonishing, the partisans of those two opposite systems were at once prevalent, and at once employed, and in the very same transactions, the one ostensibly, the other secretly, during the latter part of the reign of Louis XV. Nor was there one court in which an ambassador resided on the part of the ministers, in which another as a spy on him did not also reside on the part of the king. They who pursued the scheme for keeping peace on the continent, and particularly with Austria, acting officially and publickly, the other faction counteracting and opposing them. These private agents were continually going from their function to the Bastile, and from the Bastile to employment, and favour again. An inextricable cabal was formed, some of persons of rank, others of subordinates. But by this means the corps of politicians was augmented

augmented in number, and the whole formed a body of active, adventuring, ambitious, discontented people, despising the regular ministry, despising the courts at which they were employed, despising the court which employed them.

The unfortunate Louis the Sixteenth * was not the first cause of the evil by which he suffered. He came to it, as to a sort of inheritance, by the false politicks of his immediate predecessor. This system of dark and perplexed intrigue had come to its perfection before he came to the throne: and even then the revolution strongly operated in all its causes.

There was no point on which the discontented diplomatick politicians so bitterly arraigned their

* It may be right to do justice to Louis XVI. He did what he could to destroy the double diplomacy of France. He had all the secret correspondence burnt, except one piece, which was called, *Conjectures raisonnées sur la situation de la France dans le systeme politique de l'Europe*; a work executed by M. Favier, under the direction of count Broglie. A single copy of this was said to have been found in the cabinet of Louis XVI. It was published with some subsequent state papers of Vergennes, Turgot, and others, as, "a new benefit of the revolution;" and the advertisement to the publication ends with the following words "*Il sera facile de se convaincre, qu'* Y COMPRIS MEME LA REVOLUTION, *en grande partie,* ON TROUVE DANS CES MEMOIRES ET SES CONJECTURES LE GERME DE TOUT CE QU'ARRIVA AUJOURD'HUI, *& qu'on ne peut sans les avoir lus, être bien au fait des intérêts, & même des vues actuelles des diverses puissances de l'Europe.*" The book is entitled, *Politique de tous les Cabinets de l'Europe pendant les règnes de Louis XV. & Louis XVI.* It is altogether very curious, and worth reading.

 cabinet,

cabinet, as for the decay of French influence in all others. From quarrelling with the court, they began to complain of monarchy itself, as a system of government too variable for any regular plan of national aggrandizement. They observed, that in that sort of regimen too much depended on the personal character of the prince; that the vicissitudes produced by the succession of princes of a different character, and even the vicissitudes produced in the same man, by the different views and inclinations belonging to youth, manhood, and age, disturbed and distracted the policy of a country made by nature for extensive empire, or what was still more to their taste, for that sort of general over-ruling influence which prepared empire or supplied the place of it. They had continually in their hands the observations of *Machiavel* on *Livy*. They had *Montesquieu's Grandeur & Décadence des Romains* as a manual; and they compared with mortification the systematick proceedings of a Roman senate with the fluctuations of a monarchy. They observed, the very small additions of territory which all the power of France, actuated by all the ambition of France, had acquired in two centuries. The Romans had frequently acquired more in a single year. They severely and in every part of it criticised the reign of Louis the XIV, whose irregular and desultory ambition had more provoked than endangered Europe. Indeed, they who will be at

the

the pains of seriously considering the history of that period will see, that those French politicians had some reason. They who will not take the trouble of reviewing it through all its wars and all its negotiations, will consult the short but judicious criticism of the marquis de Montalembert on that subject. It may be read separately from his ingenious system of fortification and military defence, on the practical merit of which I am unable to form a judgment.

The diplomatick politicians of whom I speak, and who formed by far the majority in that class, made disadvantageous comparisons even between their more legal and formalising monarchy, and the monarchies of other states, as a system of power and influence. They observed, that France not only lost ground herself, but through the languor and unsteadiness of her pursuits, and from her aiming through commerce at naval force which she never could attain without losing more on one side than she could gain on the other, three great powers, each of them (as military states) capable of balancing her, had grown up on the continent. Russia and Prussia had been created almost within memory; and Austria, though not a new power, and even curtailed in territory, was by the very collision in which she lost that territory greatly improved in her military discipline and force. During the reign of Maria Theresa the interior economy

of the country was made more to correspond with the support of great armies than formerly it had been. As to Prussia, a merely military power, they observed that one war had enriched her with as considerable a conquest as France had acquired in centuries. Russia had broken the Turkish power by which Austria might be, as formerly she had been, balanced in favour of France. They felt it with pain, that the two northern powers of Sweden and Denmark were in general under the sway of Russia; or that at best, France kept up a very doubtful conflict, with many fluctuations of fortune, and at an enormous expence in Sweden. In Holland, the French party seemed, if not extinguished, at least utterly obscured, and kept under by a stadtholder, leaning for support sometimes on Great Britain, sometimes on Prussia, sometimes on both, never on France. Even the spreading of the Bourbon family had become merely a family accommodation; and had little effect on the national politicks. This alliance, they said, extinguished Spain by destroying all its energy, without adding any thing to the real power of France in the accession of the forces of its great rival. In Italy, the same family accommodation, the same national insignificance were equally visible. What cure for the radical weakness of the French monarchy, to which all the means which wit could devise, or nature and fortune could bestow, towards universal empire,

empire, was not of force to give life, or vigour, or consistency,—but in a republick? Out the word came; and it never went back.

Whether they reasoned right or wrong, or that there was some mixture of right and wrong in their reasoning, I am sure, that in this manner they felt and reasoned. The different effects of a great military and ambitious republick, and of a monarchy of the same description were constantly in their mouths. The principle was ready to operate when opportunities should offer, which few of them indeed foresaw in the extent in which they were afterwards presented; but these opportunities, in some degree or other, they all ardently wished for.

When I was in Paris in 1773, the treaty of 1756 between Austria and France was deplored as a national calamity; because it united France in friendship with a power, at whose expence alone they could hope any continental aggrandizement. When the first partition of Poland was made, in which France had no share, and which had farther aggrandized every one of the three powers of which they were most jealous, I found them in a perfect phrenzy of rage and indignation: not that they were hurt at the shocking and unexampled violence and injustice of that partition, but at the folly, improvidence, and want of activity in their government, in not preventing it as a means of aggrandizement to their rivals, or in not contriving, by exchange

exchanges of some kind or other, to obtain their share of advantage from that robbery.

In that or nearly in that state of things and of opinions, came the Austrian match; which promised to draw the knot, as afterwards in effect it did, still more closely between the old rival houses. This added exceedingly to their hatred and contempt of their monarchy. It was for this reason that the late glorious queen, who on all accounts was formed to produce general love and admiration, and whose life was as mild and beneficent as her death was beyond example great and heroick, became so very soon and so very much the object of an implacable rancour, never to be extinguished but in her blood. When I wrote my letter in answer to M. de Menonville, in the beginning of January 1791, I had good reason for thinking that this description of revolutionists did not so early nor so steadily point their murderous designs at the martyr king as at the royal heroine. It was accident, and the momentary depression of that part of the faction, that gave to the husband the happy priority in death.

From this their restless desire of an over-ruling influence, they bent a very great part of their designs and efforts to revive the old French party, which was a democratick party in Holland, and to make a revolution there. They were happy at the troubles which the singular imprudence of Joseph the

the second had stirred up in the Austrian Netherlands. They rejoiced, when they saw him irritate his subjects, profess philosophy, send away the Dutch garrisons, and dismantle his fortifications. As to Holland, they never forgave either the king or the ministry, for suffering that object, which they justly looked on as principal in their design of reducing the power of England, to escape out of their hands. This was the true secret of the commercial treaty, made, on their part, against all the old rules and principles of commerce, with a view of diverting the English nation, by a pursuit of immediate profit, from an attention to the progress of France in its designs upon that republick. The system of the œconomists, which led to the general opening of commerce, facilitated that treaty, but did not produce it. They were in despair when they found that by the vigour of Mr. Pitt, supported in this point by Mr. Fox and the opposition, the object, to which they had sacrificed their manufactures, was lost to their ambition.

This eager desire of raising France from the condition into which she had fallen, as they conceived, from her monarchical imbecility, had been the main spring of their precedent interference in that unhappy American quarrel, the bad effects of which to this nation have not, as yet, fully disclosed themselves. These sentiments had been long lurking in their breasts, though their views were only discovered

discovered now and then, in heat and as by escapes; but on this occasion they exploded suddenly. They were professed with ostentation, and propagated with zeal. These sentiments were not produced, as some think, by their American alliance. The American alliance was produced by their republican principles and republican policy. This new relation undoubtedly did much. The discourses and cabals that it produced, the intercourse that it established, and above all, the example, which made it seem practicable to establish a republick in a great extent of country, finished the work, and gave to that part of the revolutionary faction a degree of strength, which required other energies than the late king possessed, to resist, or even to restrain. It spread every where; but it was no where more prevalent than in the heart of the court. The palace of Versailles, by its language, seemed a forum of democracy. To have pointed out to most of those politicians, from their dispositions and movements, what has since happened, the fall of their own monarchy, of their own laws, of their own religion, would have been to furnish a motive the more for pushing forward a system on which they considered all these things as incumbrances. Such in truth they were. And we have seen them succeed not only in the destruction of their monarchy; but in all the objects of ambition that they proposed from that destruction.

When

When I contemplate the scheme on which France is formed, and when I compare it with these systems, with which it is, and ever must be in conflict, those things which seem as defects in her polity, are the very things which make me tremble. The states of the Christian world have grown up to their present magnitude in a great length of time, and by a great variety of accidents. They have been improved to what we see them with greater or less degrees of felicity and skill. Not one of them has been formed upon a regular plan or with any unity of design. As their constitutions are not systematical, they have not been directed to any *peculiar* end, eminently distinguished, and superseding every other. The objects which they embrace are of the greatest possible variety, and have become in a manner infinite. In all these old countries the state has been made to the people, and not the people conformed to the state. Every state has pursued, not only every sort of social advantage, but it has cultivated the welfare of every individual. His wants, his wishes, even his tastes have been consulted. This comprehensive scheme, virtually produced a degree of personal liberty in forms the most adverse to it. That liberty was found, under monarchies stiled absolute, in a degree unknown to the ancient commonwealths. From hence the powers of all our modern states, meet in all their movements, with some obstruction. It is therefore

no

no wonder that when these states are to be considered as machines to operate for some one great end, that this dissipated and balanced force is not easily concentered, or made to bear with the whole force of the nation upon one point.

The British state is, without question, that which pursues the greatest variety of ends, and is the least disposed to sacrifice any one of them to another, or to the whole. It aims at taking in the entire circle of human desires, and securing for them their fair enjoyment. Our legislature has been ever closely connected in its most efficient part, with individual feeling, and individual interest. Personal liberty, the most lively of these feelings and the most important of these interests, which in other European countries has rather arisen from the system of manners and the habitudes of life, than from the laws of the state, (in which it flourished more from neglect than attention) in England, has been a direct object of government.

On this principle England would be the weakest power in the whole system. Fortunately, however, the great riches of this kingdom arising from a variety of causes, and the disposition of the people, which is as great to spend as to accumulate, has easily afforded a disposeable surplus that gives a mighty momentum to the state. This difficulty, with these advantages to overcome it, has called forth the talents of the English financiers, who, by

the

the surplus of industry poured out by prodigality, have outdone every thing which has been accomplished in other nations. The present minister has outdone his predecessors; and as a minister of revenue, is far above my power of praise. But still there are cases in which England feels more than several others, (though they all feel) the perplexity of an immense body of balanced advantages, and of individual demands, and of some irregularity in the whole mass.

France differs essentially from all those governments which are formed without system, which exist by habit, and which are confused with the multitude, and with the perplexity of their pursuits. What now stands as government in France is struck out at a heat. The design is wicked, immoral, impious, oppressive; but it is spirited and daring; it is systematick; it is simple in its principle; it has unity and consistency in perfection. In that country entirely to cut off a branch of commerce, to extinguish a manufacture, to destroy the circulation of money, to violate credit, to suspend the course of agriculture, even to burn a city, or to lay waste a province of their own, does not cost them a moment's anxiety. To them the will, the wish, the want, the liberty, the toil, the blood of individuals is as nothing. Individuality is left out of their scheme of government. The state is all in all. Every thing is referred to the production

of

property was a combination of things, which the learned and ingenious speculator Harrington, who has tossed about society into all forms, never could imagine to be possible. We have seen it; the world has felt it; and if the world will shut their eyes to this state of things, they will feel it more. The rulers there have found their resources in crimes. The discovery is dreadful: the mine exhaustless. They have every thing to gain, and they have nothing to lose. They have a boundless inheritance in hope; and there is no medium for them, betwixt the highest elevation, and death with infamy. Never can they who from the miserable servitude of the desk have been raised to empire, again submit to the bondage of a starving bureau, or the profit of copying musick, or writing plaidoyers by the sheet. It has made me often smile in bitterness, when I have heard talk of an indemnity to such men, provided they returned to their allegiance.

From all this, what is my inference? It is, that this new system of robbery in France, cannot be rendered safe by any art; that it *must* be destroyed, or that it will destroy all Europe; that to destroy that enemy, by some means or other, the force opposed to it should be made to bear some analogy and resemblance to the force and spirit which that system exerts; that war ought to be made against it, in its vulnerable parts. These are my inferences.

In

rences. In one word, with this republick nothing independent can co-exist. The errours of Louis the XVIth were more pardonable to prudence, than any of those of the same kind into which the allied courts may fall. They have the benefit of his dreadful example.

The unhappy Louis XVI. was a man of the best intentions that probably ever reigned. He was by no means deficient in talents. He had a most laudable desire to supply by general reading, and even by the acquisition of elemental knowledge, an education in all points originally defective; but nobody told him (and it was no wonder he should not himself divine it) that the world of which he read, and the world in which he lived, were no longer the same. Desirous of doing every thing for the best, fearful of cabal, distrusting his own judgment, he sought his ministers of all kinds upon publick testimony. But as courts are the field for caballers, the publick is the theatre for mountebanks and impostors. The cure for both those evils is in the discernment of the prince. But an accurate and penetrating discernment is what in a young prince could not be looked for.

His conduct in its principle was not unwise; but, like most other of his well-meant designs, it failed in his hands. It failed partly from mere ill fortune, to which speculators are rarely pleased to assign that very large share to which she is justly

 entitled

entitled in human affairs. The failure, perhaps, in part was owing to his suffering his system to be vitiated and disturbed by those intrigues, which it is, humanly speaking, impossible wholly to prevent in courts, or indeed under any form of government. However, with these aberrations, he gave himself over to a succession of the statesmen of publick opinion. In other things he thought that he might be a king on the terms of his predecessors. He was conscious of the purity of his heart and the general good tendency of his government. He flattered himself, as most men in his situation will, that he might consult his ease without danger to his safety. It is not at all wonderful that both he and his ministers, giving way abundantly in other respects to innovation, should take up in policy with the tradition of their monarchy. Under his ancestors the monarchy had subsisted, and even been strengthened by the generation or support of republicks. First, the Swiss republicks, grew under the guardianship of the French monarchy. The Dutch republicks were hatched and cherished under the same incubation. Afterwards, a republican constitution was, under the influence of France, established in the empire against the pretensions of its chief. Even whilst the monarchy of France, by a series of wars and negotiations, and lastly by the treaties of Westphalia, had obtained the establishment of the protestants in Germany

many as a law of the empire, the same monarchy under Louis the XIIIth, had force enough to destroy the republican system of the protestants at home.

Louis the XVIth was a diligent reader of history. But the very lamp of prudence blinded him. The guide of human life led him astray. A silent revolution in the moral world preceded the political, and prepared it. It became of more importance than ever what examples were given, and what measures were adopted. Their causes no longer lurked in the recesses of cabinets, or in the private conspiracies of the factious. They were no longer to be controlled by the force and influence of the grandees, who formerly had been able to stir up troubles by their discontents, and to quiet them by their corruption. The chain of subordination, even in cabal and sedition, was broken in its most important links. It was no longer the great and the populace. Other interests were formed, other dependencies, other connexions, other communications. The middle classes had swelled far beyond their former proportion. Like whatever is the most effectively rich and great in society, these classes became the seat of all the active politics, and the preponderating weight to decide on them. There were all the energies by which [illegible] acquired; there the consequence of their [illegible]. There were all the talents which [illegible]

tensions, and are impatient of the place which settled society prescribes to them. These descriptions had got between the great and the populace; and the influence on the lower classes was with them. The spirit of ambition had taken possession of this class as violently as ever it had done of any other. They felt the importance of this situation. The correspondence of the monied and the mercantile world, the literary intercourse of academies but, above all, the press, of which they had in a manner entire possession, made a kind of electrick communication every where. The press, in reality, has made every government, in its spirit, almost democratick. Without the great, the first movements in this revolution could not, perhaps, have been given. But the spirit of ambition, now for the first time connected with the spirit of speculation, was not to be restrained at will. There was no longer any means of arresting a principle in its course. When Louis the XVIth, under the influence of the enemies to monarchy, meant to found but one republick, he set up two. When he meant to take away half the crown of his neighbour, he lost the whole of his own. Louis the XVIth could not with impunity countenance a new republick: yet between his throne and that dangerous lodgment for an enemy, which he had erected, he had the whole Atlantick for a ditch. He had for an out-work the English nation itself,

friendly

friendly to liberty, adverse to that mode of it. He was surrounded by a rampart of monarchies, most of them allied to him, and generally under his influence. Yet even thus secured, a republick erected under his auspices, and dependent on his power, become fatal to his throne. The very money which he had lent to support this republick, by a good faith, which to him operated as perfidy, was punctually paid to his enemies, and became a resource in the hands of his assassins.

With this example before their eyes, do any ministers in England, do any ministers in Austria, really flatter themselves, that they can erect, not on the remote shores of the Atlantick, but in their view, in their vicinity, in absolute contact with one of them, not a commercial but a martial republick—a republick not of simple husbandmen or fishermen, but of intriguers, and of warriors—a republick of a character the most restless, the most enterprising, the most impious, the most fierce and bloody, the most hypocritical and perfidious, the most bold and daring that ever has been seen, or indeed that can be conceived to exist, without bringing on their own certain ruin?

Such is the republick to which we are going to give a place in civilised fellowship: The republick, which with joint consent we are going to establish in the centre of Europe, in a post that overlooks and commands every other state, and

which

which eminently confronts and menaces this kingdom.

You cannot fail to observe, that I speak as if the allied powers were actually consenting, and not compelled by events to the establishment of this faction in France. The words have not escaped me. You will hereafter naturally expect that I should make them good. But whether in adopting this measure we are madly active, or weakly passive, or pusillanimously panick-struck, the effects will be the same. You may call this faction, which has eradicated the monarchy,—expelled the proprietary, persecuted religion, and trampled upon law*,—you may call this France if you please: but of the ancient France nothing remains, but its central geography; its iron frontier; its spirit of ambition; its audacity of enterprise; its perplexing intrigue. These and these alone remain; and they remain heightened in their principle and augmented in their means. All the former correctives, whether of virtue or of weakness, which existed in the old monarchy, are gone. No single new corrective is to be found in the whole body of the new institutions. How should such a thing be found there, when every thing has been chosen with care and selection to forward all those ambitious designs and dispositions, not to control them? The whole

* See our Declaration.

is

is a body of ways and means for the supply of dominion, without one heterogeneous particle in it.

Here I suffer you to breathe, and leave to your meditation what has occurred to me on the *genius and character* of the French revolution. From having this before us, we may be better able to determine on the first question I proposed, that is, how far nations, called foreign, are likely to be affected with the system established within that territory. I intended to proceed next on the question of her facilities, from *the internal state of other nations, and particularly of this*, for obtaining her ends: but I ought to be aware, that my notions are controverted.—I mean, therefore, in my next letter, to take notice of what, in that way, has been recommended to me as the most deserving of notice. In the examination of those pieces, I shall have occasion to discuss some others of the topicks to which I have called your attention. You know, that the letters which I now send to the press, as well as a part of what is to follow, have been in their substance long since written. A circumstance which your partiality alone could make of importance to you, but which to the publick is of no importance at all, retarded their appearance. The late events which press upon us obliged me to make some additions; but no substantial change in the matter.

This discussion, my friend, will be long. But the matter is serious; and if ever the fate of the world could be truly said to depend on a particular measure, it is upon this peace. For the present, farewell.

LETTER III.

ON THE

RUPTURE OF THE NEGOTIATION;

THE

TERMS OF PEACE PROPOSED;

AND THE

RESOURCES OF THE COUNTRY

FOR THE CONTINUANCE OF

THE WAR.

1797.

inn. Yet I see we persevere. Fatigued with our former course; too listless to explore a new one; kept in action by inertness; moving only because we have been in motion; with a sort of plodding perseverance, we resolve to measure back again the very same joyless, hopeless, and inglorious track. Backward and forward; oscillation not progression; much going in a scanty space; the travels of a postillion, miles enough to circle the globe in one short stage; we have been, and we are yet to be jolted and rattled over the loose, misplaced stones, and the treacherous hollows of this rough, ill kept, broken up, treacherous French causeway!

The declaration which brings up the rear of the papers laid before parliament, contains a review and a reasoned summary of all our attempts, and all our failures; a concise but correct narrative of the painful steps taken to bring on the essay of a treaty at Paris; a clear exposure of all the rebuffs we received in the progress of that experiment; an honest confession of our departure from all the rules and all the principles of political negotiation, and of common prudence, in the conduct of it; and to crown the whole, a fair account of the atrocious manner in which the regicide enemies had broken up what had been so inauspiciously begun and so feebly carried on, by finally, and with all scorn driving our suppliant ambassador, out of the limits of their usurpation.

Even

Even after all that I have lately seen, I was a little surprised at this exposure. A minute display of hopes formed without foundation, and of labours pursued without fruit, is a thing not very flattering to self-estimation. But truth has its rights, and it will assert them. The declaration, after doing all this with a mortifying candour, concludes the whole recapitulation with an engagement still more extraordinary than all the unusual matter it contains. It says, "That his majesty, who had entered into this negotiation with *good faith*, who has suffered *no* impediment to prevent his prosecuting it with *earnestness and sincerity*, has now *only to lament* its abrupt termination, and to renew *in the face of all Europe the solemn declaration*, that whenever his enemies shall be *disposed* to enter upon the work of a general pacification in a spirit of conciliation and equity, nothing shall be wanting on his part to contribute to the accomplishment of that great object."

If the disgusting detail of the accumulated insults we have received, in what we have properly called our "solicitation," to a gang of felons and murderers, had been produced as a proof of the utter inefficacy of that mode of proceeding with that description of persons, I should have nothing at all to object to it. It might furnish matter conclusive in argument, and instructive in policy: but with

with all due submission to high authority, and with all decent deference to superiour lights, it does not seem quite clear to a discernment no better than mine, that the premises in that piece conduct irresistibly to the conclusion. A laboured display of the ill consequences which have attended an uniform course of submission to every mode of contumelious insult, with which the despotism of a proud, capricious, insulting and implacable foe has chosen to buffet our patience, does not appear, to my poor thoughts, to be properly brought forth as a preliminary to justify a resolution of persevering in the very same kind of conduct, towards the very same sort of person, and on the very same principles. We state our experience, and then we come to the manly resolution of acting in contradiction to it. All that has passed at Paris, to the moment of our being shamefully hissed off that stage, has been nothing but a more solemn representation, on the theatre of the nation, of what had been before in rehearsal at Basle. As it is not only confessed by us, but made a matter of charge on the enemy, that he had given us no encouragement to believe there was a change in his disposition or in his policy at any time subsequent to the period of his rejecting our first overtures, there seems to have been no assignable motive for sending Lord Malmesbury to Paris, except to expose his humbled country

country to the worst indignities and the first of the kind, as the declaration very truly observes, that have been known in the world of negotiation.

An honest neighbour of mine is not altogether unhappy in the application of an old common story to a present occasion. It may be said of my friend, what Horace says of a neighbour of his, "*garrit* "*anites ex re fabellas.*" Conversing on this strange subject, he told me a current story of a simple English country 'squire, who was persuaded by certain *dilettanti* of his acquaintance to see the world, and to become knowing in men and manners.

Among other celebrated places, it was recommended to him to visit Constantinople. He took their advice. After various adventures, not to our purpose to dwell upon, he happily arrived at that famous city. As soon as he had a little reposed himself from his fatigue, he took a walk into the streets; but he had not gone far, before a "malig- "nant and a turban'd Turk" had his choler roused by the careless and assured air, with which this infidel strutted about in the metropolis of true believers. In this temper, he lost no time in doing to our traveller the honours of the place. The Turk crossed over the way, and with perfect good-will gave him two or three lusty kicks on the seat of honour. To resent, or to return the compliment in Turkey, was quite out of the question. Our traveller, since he could no otherwise acknowledge

this

this kind of favour, received it with the best grace in the world—he made one of his most ceremonious bows, and begged the kicking mussulman, " to ac- " cept his perfect assurances of high consideration." Our countryman was too wise to imitate Othello in the use of the dagger. He thought it better, as better it was, to assuage his bruised dignity with half a yard square of balmy diplomatick diachylon. In the disasters of their friends, people are seldom wanting in a laudable patience. When they are such as do not threaten to end fatally, they become even matter of pleasantry. The English fellow travellers of our sufferer, finding him a little out of spirits, entreated him not to take so slight a business so very seriously. They told him it was the custom of the country; that every country had its customs; that the Turkish manners were a little rough; but that in the main the Turks were a good-natured people; that what would have been a deadly affront any where else, was only a little freedom there; in short, they told him to think no more of the matter, and to try his fortune in another *promenade*. But the 'squire, though a little clownish, had some home-bred sense. What! have I come, at all this expence and trouble, all the way to Constantinople only to be kicked? Without going beyond my own stable, my groom, for half a crown, would have kicked me to my heart's content. I don't mean to stay in Constantinople eight

and

and forty hours, nor ever to return to this rough, good-natured people, that have their own customs.

In my opinion the squire was in the right. He was satisfied with his first ramble and his first injuries. But reason of state and common sense are two things. If it were not for this difference it might not appear of absolute necessity, after having received a certain quantity of buffetings by advance, that we should send a peer of the realm to the scum of the earth, to collect the debt to the last farthing; and to receive, with infinite aggravation, the same scorns which had been paid to our supplication through a commoner: but it was proper, I suppose, that the whole of our country, in all its orders, should have a share of the indignity; and, as in reason, that the higher orders should touch the larger proportion.

This business was not ended, because our dignity was wounded, or because our patience was worn out with contumely and scorn. We had not disgorged one particle of the nauseous doses with which we were so liberally crammed by the mountebanks of Paris, in order to drug and diet us into perfect tameness. No; we waited, till the morbid strength of our *boulimia* for their physick had exhausted the well-stored dispensary of their empiricism. It is impossible to guess at the term to which our forbearance would have extended. The regicides were more fatigued with giving

blows than the callous cheek of British diplomacy was hurt in receiving them. They have had no way left for getting rid of this mendicant preseverance, but by sending for the beadle, and forcibly driving our embassy 'of shreds and patches,' with all its mumping cant, from the inhospitable door of cannibal castle—

> "Where the gaunt mastiff, growling at the gate,
> "Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat."

I think we might have found, before the rude hand of insolent office was on our shoulder, and the staff of usurped authority brandished over our heads, that contempt of the suppliant is not the best forwarder of a suit; that national disgrace is not the high road to security, much less to power and greatness. Patience, indeed, strongly indicates the love of peace: but mere love does not always lead to enjoyment. It is the power of winning that palm which ensures our wearing it. Virtues have their place; and out of their place they hardly deserve the name. They pass into the neighbouring vice. The patience of fortitude and the endurance of pusillanimity are things very different, as in their principle, so in their effects.

In truth this declaration, containing a narrative of the first transaction of the kind (and I hope it will be the last) in the intercourse of nations, as a composition, is ably drawn. It does credit to our

official

official style. The report of the speech of the minister in a great assembly, which I have read, is a comment upon the declaration. Without inquiry how far that report is exact, (inferiour I believe it may be to what it would represent,) yet still it reads as a most eloquent and finished performance. Hardly one galling circumstance of the indignities offered by the directory of regicide to the supplications made to that junto in his majesty's name, has been spared. Every one of the aggravations attendant on these acts of outrage is, with wonderful perspicuity and order, brought forward in its place, and in the manner most fitted to produce its effect. They are turned to every point of view in which they can be seen to the best advantage. All the parts are so arranged as to point out their relation, and to furnish a true idea of the spirit of the whole transaction.

This speech may stand for a model. Never, for the triumphal decoration of any theatre, not for the decoration of those of Athens and Rome, or even of this theatre of Paris, from the embroideries of Babylon or from the loom of the Gobelins, has there been sent any historick tissue, so truly drawn, so closely and so finely wrought, or in which the forms are brought out in the rich purple of such glowing and blushing colours. It puts me in mind of the piece of tapestry, with which Virgil proposed to adorn the theatre he was to erect to Augustus,

upon the banks of the Mincio, who now hides his head in his reeds, and leads his slow and melancholy windings through banks wasted by the barbarians of Gaul. He supposes that the artifice is such, that the figures of the conquered nations in his tapestry are made to play their part, and are confounded in the machine:

" ——————— utque
" Purpureis intexti tollant aulæa Britanni;"

Or as Dryden translates it somewhat paraphrastically, but not less in the spirit of the prophet than of the poet,

" Where the proud theatres disclose the scene,
Which, interwoven, Britons seem to raise,
And shew the triumph which their shame displays."

It is something wonderful, that the sagacity shown in the declaration and the speech (and, so far as it goes, greater was never shown) should have failed to discover to the writer and to the speaker, the inseparable relation between the parties to this transaction; and that nothing can be said to display the imperious arrogance of a base enemy, which does not describe with equal force and equal truth the contemptible figure of an abject embassy to that imperious power.

It is no less striking, that the same obvious reflexion

reflexion should not occur to those gentlemen who conducted the opposition to government. But their thoughts were turned another way. They seem to have been so entirely occupied with the defence of the French directory, so very eager in finding recriminatory precedents to justify every act of its intolerable insolence, so animated in their accusations of ministry for not having, at the very outset, made concessions proportioned to the dignity of the great victorious power he had offended, that every thing concerning the sacrifice in this business of national honour, and of the most fundamental principles in the policy of negotiation, seemed wholly to have escaped them. To this fatal hour, the contention in parliament appeared into another form, and was animated by another spirit. For three hundred years and more, we have had wars with what stood as government in France. In all that period the language of ministers, whether of boast or of apology, was, that they had left nothing undone for the assertion of the national honour; the opposition, whether patriotically or factiously, contending, that the ministers had been oblivious of the national glory, and had made improper sacrifices of that publick interest, which they were bound not only to preserve, but by all fair methods to augment. This total change of tone on both sides of your house, forms itself no inconsiderable revolution; and I am afraid it

prognosticates

the blessings of the peace we seek. This defect, to my power, I mean to supply; that if any persons should still continue to think an attempt at foresight is any part of the duty of a statesman, I may contribute my trifle to the materials of his speculation.

As to the other party, the minority of to-day, possibly the majority of to-morrow, small in number but full of talents and every species of energy, which, upon the avowed ground of being more acceptable to France, is a candidate for the helm of this kingdom, it has never changed from the beginning. It has preserved a perennial consistency. This would be a never-failing source of true glory, if springing from just and right; but it is truly dreadful if it be an arm of Styx, which springs out of the profoundest depths of a poisoned soil. The French maxims were by these gentlemen at no time condemned. I speak of their language in the most moderate terms. There are many who think that they have gone much further; that they have always magnified and extolled the French maxims; that not in the least disgusted or discouraged by the monstrous evils, which have attended these maxims from the moment of their adoption, both at home and abroad, they still continue to predict, that in due time they must produce the greatest good to the poor human race. They obstinately persist in stating those evils as

matter

matter of accident; as things wholly collateral to the system.

It is observed, that this party has never spoken of an ally of Great Britain with the smallest degree of respect or regard; on the contrary, it has generally mentioned them under opprobrious appellations, and in such terms of contempt or execrations, has never had been heard before, because no such would have formerly been permitted in our publick assemblies. The moment, however, that any of those allies quitted this obnoxious connexion, the party has instantly passed an act of indemnity and oblivion in their favour. After this, no sort of censure on their conduct; no imputation on their character! From that moment their pardon was sealed in a reverential and mysterious silence. With the gentlemen of this minority, there is no ally, from one end of Europe to the other, with whom we ought not to be ashamed to act. The whole college of the states of Europe is no better than a gang of tyrants. With them all our connexions were broken off at once. We ought to have cultivated France, and France alone, from the moment of her revolution. On than happy change, all our dread of that nation as a power was to cease. She became in an instant dear to our affections, and one with our interests. All other nations we ought to have commanded not to trouble her sacred throes, whilst in labour to bring into an happy

birth

nobility and gentry, and merchants and bankers, who staid at home, had enjoyed their property in security and repose. The assertors of these positions well know, that the lot of thousands who remained at home was far more terrible; that the most cruel imprisonment was only a harbinger of a cruel and ignominious death; and that in this mother country of freedom, there were no less than *Three Hundred Thousand* at one time in prison. I go no further. I instance only these representations of the party as staring indications of partiality to that sect, to whose dominion they would have left this country nothing to oppose but her own naked force, and consequently subjected us, on every reverse of fortune, to the imminent danger of falling under those very evils in that very system, which are attributed, not to its own nature, but to the perverseness of others. There is nothing in the world so difficult as to put men in a state of judicial neutrality. A leaning there must ever be, and it is of the first importance to any nation to observe to what side that leaning inclines—whether to our own community, or to one with which it is in a state of hostility.

Men are rarely without some sympathy in the sufferings of others; but in the immense and diversified mass of human misery, which may be pitied, but cannot be relieved, in the gross, the mind must make a choice. Our sympathy is always more forcibly attracted towards the misfortunes of certain

persons,

persons, and in certain descriptions: and this sympathetick attraction discovers, beyond a possibility of mistake, our mental affinities, and elective affections. It is a much surer proof, than the strongest declaration, of a real connexion and of an overruling bias in the mind. I am told that the active sympathies of this party have been chiefly, if not wholly, attracted to the sufferings of the patriarchal rebels, who were amongst the promulgators of the maxims of the French revolution, and who have suffered, from their apt and forward scholars, some part of the evils, which they had themselves so liberally distributed to all the other parts of the community. Some of these men, flying from the knives which they had sharpened against their country and its laws, rebelling against the very powers they had set over themselves by their rebellion against their sovereign, given up by those very armies to whose faithful attachment they trusted for their safety and support, after they had completely debauched all military fidelity in its source; some of these men, I say, had fallen into the hands of the head of that family, the most illustrious person of which they had three times cruelly imprisoned, and delivered in that state of captivity to those hands from which they were able to relieve neither her, nor their own nearest and most venerable kindred. One of these men, connected with this country by no circumstance of birth; not related

to

to any distinguished families here; recommended by no service; endeared to this nation by no act or even expression of kindness; comprehended in no league or common cause; embraced by no laws of publick hospitality; this man was the only one to be found in Europe, in whose favour the British nation, passing judgment, without hearing, on its almost only ally, was to force (and that not by soothing interposition, but with every reproach for inhumanity, cruelty, and breach of the laws of war) from prison. We were to release him from that prison out of which, in abuse of the lenity of government amidst its rigour, and in violation of at least an understood parole, he had attempted an escape; an escape excuseable if you will, but naturally productive of strict and vigilant confinement. The earnestness of gentlemen to free this person was the more extraordinary, because there was full as little in him to raise admiration, from any eminent qualities he possessed, as there was to excite an interest, from any that were amiable. A person, not only of no real civil or literary talents, but of no specious appearance of either; and in his military profession, not marked as a leader in any one act of able or successful enterprise—unless his leading on (or his following) the allied army of Amazonian and male cannibal Parisians to Versailles, on the famous fifth of October, 1789, is to make his glory. Any other exploit of his, as a general,

general, I never heard of. But the triumph of general fraternity, was but the more signalized by the total want of particular claims, in that case; and by postponing all such claims, in a case where they really existed, where they stood embossed, and in a manner forced themselves on the view of common short-sighted benevolence. Whilst, for its improvement, the humanity of those gentlemen was thus on its travels, and had got as far off as Olmutz, they never thought of a place and a person much nearer to them, or of moving an instruction to Lord Malmesbury in favour of their own suffering countryman, Sir Sydney Smith.

This officer, having attempted, with great gallantry, to cut out a vessel from one of the enemy's harbours, was taken after an obstinate resistance; such as obtained him the marked respect of those who were witnesses of his valour, and knew the circumstances in which it was displayed. Upon his arrival at Paris, he was instantly thrown into prison; where the nature of his situation will best be understood, by knowing, that amongst its *mitigations*, was the permission to walk occasionally in the court, and to enjoy the privilege of shaving himself. On the old system of feelings and principles, his sufferings might have been entitled to consideration, and even in a comparison with those of citizen la Fayette, to a priority in the order of compassion. If the ministers had neglected to take

take any steps in his favour, a declaration of the sense of the house of commons would have stimulated them to their duty. If they had caused a representation to be made, such a proceeding would have added force to it. If reprisal should be thought adviseable, the address of the house would have given an additional sanction to a measure which would have been, indeed, justifiable without any other sanction than its own reason. But no. Nothing at all like it. In fact, the merit of Sir Sydney Smith, and his claim on British compassion, was of a kind altogether different from that which interested so deeply the authors of the motion in favour of citizen la Fayette. In my humble opinion, Captain Sir Sydney Smith has another sort of merit with the British nation, and something of a higher claim on British humanity than citizen la Fayette. Faithful, zealous, and ardent in the service of his king and country; full of spirit; full of resources; going out of the beaten road, but going right, because his uncommon enterprise was not conducted by a vulgar judgment; —in his profession, Sir Sydney Smith might be considered as a distinguished person, if any person could well be distinguished in a service in which scarce a commander can be named without putting you in mind of some action of intrepidity, skill, and vigilance, that has given them a fair title to contend with any men and in any age. But I

 will

will say nothing farther of the merits of Sir Sydney Smith: the mortal animosity of the regicide enemy supersedes all other panegyrick. Their hatred is a judgment in his favour without appeal. At present he is lodged in the tower of the Temple, the last prison of Louis the Sixteenth, and the last but one of Maria Antonietta of Austria; the prison of Louis the Seventeenth; the prison of Elizabeth of Bourbon. There he lies, unpitied by the grand philanthropy, to meditate upon the fate of those who are faithful to their king and country. Whilst this prisoner, secluded from intercourse, was indulging in these cheering reflections, he might possibly have had the further consolation of learning (by means of the insolent exultation of his guards) that there was an English ambassador at Paris; he might have had the proud comfort of hearing, that this ambassador had the honour of passing his mornings in respectful attendance at the office of a regicide pettifogger; and that in the evening he relaxed in the amusements of the opera, and in the spectacle of an audience totally new; an audience in which he had the pleasure of seeing about him not a single face that he could formerly have known in Paris; but in the place of that company, one indeed more than equal to it in display of gaiety, splendour and luxury; a set of abandoned wretches, squandering in insolent

riot the spoils of their bleeding country. A subject of profound reflection both to the prisoner and to the ambassador.

Whether all the matter upon which I have grounded my opinion of this last party be fully authenticated or not, must be left to those who have had the opportunity of a nearer view of its conduct, and who have been more attentive in their perusal of the writings, which have appeared in its favour. But for my part, I have never heard the gross facts on which I ground my idea of their marked partiality to the reigning tyranny in France, in any part, denied. I am not surprised at all this. Opinions, as they sometimes follow, so they frequently guide and direct the affections; and men may become more attached to the country of their principles, than to the country of their birth. What I have stated here is only to mark the spirit which seems to me, though in somewhat different ways, to actuate our great party leaders; and to trace this first pattern of a negotiation to its true source.

Such is the present state of our public counsels. Well might I be ashamed of what seems to be a censure of two great factions, with the two most eloquent men, which this country ever saw, at the head of them, if I had found that either of them could support their conduct by any example in the history of their country. I should very much prefer their

their judgment to my own, if I were not obliged, by an infinitely overbalancing weight of authority, to prefer the collected wisdom of ages to the abilities of any two men living. I return to the declaration, with which the history of the abortion of a treaty with the regicides is closed.

After such an elaborate display had been made of the injustice and insolence of an enemy, who seems to have been irritated by every one of the means, which had been commonly used with effect to soothe the rage of intemperate power, the natural result would be, that the scabbard, in which we in vain attempted to plunge our sword, should have been thrown away with scorn. It would have been natural, that, rising in the fulness of their might, insulted, majesty, despised dignity, violated justice, rejected supplication, patience goaded into fury, would have poured out all the length of the reigns upon all the wrath which they had so long restrained. It might have been expected, that emulous of the glory of the youthful hero * in alliance with him, touched by the example of what one man well formed and well placed, may do in the most desperate state of affairs, convinced there is a courage of the cabinet full as powerful and far less vulgar than that of the field, our minister would have changed the whole line of that unless

* The Archduke Charles of Austria.

prosperous prudence, which had hitherto produced all the effects of the blindest temerity. If he found his situation full of danger, (and I do not deny that it is perilous in the extreme) he must feel that it is also full of glory; and that he is placed on a stage, than which no muse of fire that had ascended the highest heaven of invention, could imagine any thing more awful and august. It was hoped, that in this swelling scene in which he moved with some of the first potentates of Europe for his fellow actors, and with so many of the rest for the anxious spectators of a part, which, as he plays it, determines for ever their destiny and his own, like Ulysses in the unravelling point of the epick story, he would have thrown off his patience and his rags together; and stripped of unworthy disguises, he would have stood forth in the form, and in the attitude of an hero. On that day, it was thought he would have assumed the port of Mars; that he would bid to be brought forth from their hideous kennel (where his scrupulous tenderness had too long immured them) those impatient dogs of war, whose fierce regards affright even the minister of vengeance that feeds them; that he would let them loose, in famine, fever, plagues, and death, upon a guilty race, to whose frame, and to all whose habit, order, peace, religion, and virtue are alien and abhorrent. It was expected that he would at last have thought

of

of active and effectual war; that he would no longer amuse the British lion in the chace of mice and rats; that he would no longer employ the whole naval power of Great Britain, once the terrour of the world, to prey upon the miserable remains of a peddling commerce, which the enemy did not regard, and from which none could profit. It was expected, that he would have re-asserted the justice of his cause; that he would have re-animated whatever remained to him of his allies, and endeavoured to recover those whom their fears had led astray; that he would have rekindled the martial ardour of his citizens; that he would have held out to them the example of their ancestry, the assertor of Europe, and the scourge of French ambition; that he would have reminded them of a posterity, which if this nefarious robbery, under the fraudulent name and false colour of a government, should in full power be seated in the heart of Europe, must for ever be consigned to vice, impiety, barbarism, and the most ignominious slavery of body and mind. In so holy a cause it was presumed, that he would (as in the beginning of the war he did) have opened all the temples; and with prayer, with fasting, and with supplication (better directed than to the grim Moloch of regicide in France), have called upon us to raise that united cry, which has so often stormed Heaven, and with a pious violence forced down blessings upon a repentant

repentant people. It was hoped that when he had invoked upon his endeavours the favourable regard of the Protector of the human race, it would be seen that his menaces to the enemy, and his prayers to the Almighty, were not followed, but accompanied, with correspondent action. It was hoped that his shrilling trumpet should be heard, not to announce a shew, but to sound a charge.

Such a conclusion to such a declaration and such a speech, would have been a thing of course; so much a thing of course, that I will be bold to say, if in any ancient history, the Roman for instance, (supposing that in Rome the matter of such a detail could have been furnished) a consul had gone through such a long train of proceedings, and that there was a chasm in the manuscripts by which we had lost the conclusion of the speech and the subsequent part of the narrative, all criticks would agree, that a *Freinshemius* would have been thought to have managed the supplementary business of a continuator most unskilfully, and to have supplied the hiatus most improbably, if he had not filled up the gaping space, in a manner somewhat similar (though better executed) to what I have imagined. But too often different is rational conjecture from melancholy fact. This exordium, as contrary to all the rules of rhetorick, as to those more essential rules of policy which our situation would dictate, is intended as a prelude to a deadening

deadening and disheartening proposition; as if all that a minister had to fear in a war of his own conducting, was, that the people should pursue it with too ardent a zeal. Such a tone, as I guessed the minister would have taken, I am very sure, is the true, unsuborned, unsophisticated language of genuine natural feeling under the smart of patience exhausted and abused. Such a conduct as the facts stated in the declaration gave room to expect, is that which true wisdom would have dictated under the impression of those genuine feelings. Never was there a jar or discord, between genuine sentiment and sound policy. Never, no, never did nature say one thing and wisdom say another. Nor are sentiments of elevation in themselves turgid and unnatural. Nature is never more truly herself, than in her grandest form. The Apollo, of Belvedere (if the universal robber has yet left him at Belvedere) is as much in nature, as any figure from the pencil of Rembrandt, or any clown in the rustick revels of Teniers. Indeed it is when a great nation is in great difficulties, that minds must exalt themselves to the occasion, or all is lost. Strong passion under the direction of a feeble reason feeds a low fever, which serves only to destroy the body that entertains it. But vehement passion does not always indicate an infirm judgment. It often accompanies, and actuates, and is even auxiliary to a powerful understanding; and when they

both

both conspire and act harmoniously, their force is great to destroy disorder within, and to repel injury from abroad. If ever there was a time that calls on us for no vulgar conception of things, and for exertions in no vulgar strain, it is the awful hour that Providence has now appointed to this nation. Every little measure is a great errour; and every great errour will bring on no small ruin. Nothing can be directed above the mark that we must aim at: Every thing below it is absolutely thrown away.

Except with the addition of the unheard-of insult offered to our ambassador by his rude expulsion, we are never to forget that the point on which the negociation with De la Croix broke off, was exactly that which had stifled in its cradle the negotiation we had attempted with Barthélémy. Each of these transactions, concluded with a manifesto upon our part: but the last of our manifestoes very materially differed from the first. The first declaration stated, that "*nothing was left* but "to prosecute a war *equally just and necessary*." In the second, the justice and necessity of the war is dropped: the sentence importing that nothing was left but the prosecution of such a war, disappears also. Instead of this resolution to prosecute the war, we sink into a whining lamentation on the abrupt termination of the treaty. We have nothing left but the last resource of female weakness,

of

of helpless infancy, of doting decrepitude,—wailing and lamentation. We cannot even utter a sentiment of vigour—" his majesty has only to " lament." A poor possession, to be left to a great monarch! Mark the effect produced on our councils by continued insolence, and inveterate hostility! We grow more malleable under their blows. In reverential silence, we smother the cause and origin of the war. On that fundamental article of faith, we leave every one to abound in his own sense. In the minister's speech, glossing on the declaration, it is indeed mentioned; but very feebly. The lines are so faintly drawn as hardly to be traced. They only make a part of our *consolation* in the circumstances which we so dolefully lament. We rest our merits on the humility, the earnestness of solicitation, and the perfect good faith of those submissions, which have been used to persuade our regicide enemies to grant us some sort of peace. Not a word is said, which might not have been full as well said, and much better to, if the British nation had appeared in the simple character of a penitent convinced of his errours and offences, and offering, by penances, by pilgrimages, and by all the modes of expiation ever devised by anxious, restless guilt, to make all the atonement in his miserable power.

The declaration ends as I have before quoted it, with a solemn voluntary pledge, the most full and the most solemn that ever was given, of our resolution

resolution (if so it may be called) to enter again into the very same course. It requires nothing more of the regicides, than to furnish some sort of excuse, some sort of colourable pretext, for our renewing the supplications of innocence at the feet of guilt. It leaves the moment of negotiation a most important moment, to the choice of the enemy. He is to regulate it according to the convenience of his affairs. He is to bring it forward at that time when it may best serve to establish his authority at home, and to extend his power abroad. A dangerous assurance for this nation to give, whether it is broken or whether it is kept. As all treaty was broken off, and broken off in the manner we have seen, the field of future conduct ought to be reserved free and unimcumbered to our future discretion. As to the sort of condition prefixed to the pledge, namely, "that the enemy should be "disposed to enter into the work of general paci-"fication with the spirit of reconciliation and "equity," this phraseology cannot possibly be considered otherwise, than as so many words thrown in to fill the sentence, and o round it to the ear. We prefixed the same plausible conditions to any renewal of the negotiation, in our manifesto on the rejection of our poposals at Basle. We did not consider th condi ns binding. We opened a much tion without any sort of regard to is no new negotiation, which we can y upon fewer indications of

of conciliation and equity, than were to be discovered, when we entered into our last at Paris. Any of the slightest pretences, any of the most loose, formal equivocating expressions, would justify us under the peroration of this piece, in again sending the last, or some other Lord Malmesbury to Paris.

I hope I misunderstand this pledge; or that we shall shew no more regard to it, than we have done to all the faith, that we have plighted to vigour and resolution in our former declaration. If I am to understand the conclusion of the declaration to be what unfortunately it seems to me, we make an engagement with the enemy, without any correspondent engagement on his side. We seem to have cut ourselves off from any benefit which an intermediate state of things might furnish to enable us totally to overturn that power, so little connected with moderation and justice. By holding out no hope, either to the justly discontented in France, or to any foreign power, and leaving the re-commencement of all treaty to this identical junto of assassins, we do in effect assure and guarantee to them, the full possession of the rich fruits of their confiscations, of their murders of men, women, and children, and of all the multiplied, endless, nameless iniquities by which they have obtained their power. We guarantee to them the possession of a [illegible] uated as France,

France, round, entire, immensely perhaps augmented.

Well! some will say, in this case we have only submitted to the nature of things. The nature of things is, I admit, a sturdy adversary. This might be alledged as a plea for our attempt at a treaty. But what plea of that kind can be alledged, after the treaty was dead and gone, in favour of this posthumous declaration? No necessity has driven us to *that* pledge. It is without a counterpart even in expectation. And what can be stated to obviate the evil which that solitary engagement must produce on the understanding or the fears of men? I ask, what have the regicides promised you in return, in case *you* should shew what *they* would call dispositions to conciliation and equity, whilst you are giving that pledge from the throne, and engaging parliament to counter-secure it? It is an awful consideration. It was on the very day of the date of this wonderful pledge*, in which we assumed the directorial government as lawful, and in which we engaged ourselves to treat with them when ever they pleased; it was on that very day the regicide fleet was weighing anchor from one of your harbours, where it had remained four days in perfect quiet. These harbours of the British dominions are the ports of France. They are of no use but to

* Dec. 27, 1796.

protect

protect an enemy from our best allies, the storms of Heaven, and his own rashness. Had the *West* of Ireland been an unportuous coast, the French naval power would have been undone. The enemy uses the moment for hostility, without the least regard to your future disposition of equity and conciliation. They go out of what were once your harbours, and they return to them at their pleasure. Eleven days they had the full use of Bantry Bay, and at length their fleet returns from their harbour of Bantry to their harbour of Brest. Whilst you are invoking the propitious spirit of regicide equity and conciliation, they answer you with an attack. They turn out the pacifick bearer of your "how do you does," Lord Malmesbury; and they return your visit, and their "thanks for your obliging inquiries," by their old practised assassin *Hoche*. They come to attack—What? A town, a fort, a naval station? They come to attack your king, your constitution, and the very being of that parliament, which was holding out to them these pledges, together with the entireness of the empire, the laws, liberties, and properties of all the people. We know that they meditated the very same invasion, and for the very same purposes, upon this kingdom; and had the coast been as opportune, would have effected it.

Whilst *you* are in vain torturing your invention to assure them of *your* sincerity and good faith, they have

have left no doubt concerning *their* good faith, and *their* sincerity towards those to whom they have engaged their honour. To their power they have been true to the only pledge they have ever yet given to you, or to any of yours, I mean the solemn engagement which they entered into with the deputation of traitors who appeared at their bar, from England and from Ireland, in 1792. They have been true and faithful to the engagement which they had made more largely; that is, their engagement to give effectual aid to insurrection and treason, wherever they might appear in the world. We have seen the British declaration. This is the counter-declaration of the directory. This is the reciprocal pledge which regicide amity gives to the conciliatory pledges of kings! But, thank God, such pledges cannot exist single. They have no counterpart; and if they had, the enemy's conduct cancels such declarations; and I trust, along with them, cancels every thing of mischief and dishonour that they contain.

There is one thing in this business which appears to be wholly unaccountable, or accountable, on a supposition I dare not entertain for a moment. I cannot help asking, Why all this pains, to clear the Britishnation of ambition, perfidy, and the insatiate thirst of war? At what period of time was it that our country has deserved that load of infamy, of which nothing but preternatural humiliation in language

language and conduct can serve to clear us? If we have deserved this kind of evil fame from any thing we have done in a state of prosperity, I am sure that it is not an abject conduct in adversity that can clear our reputation. Well is it known that ambition can creep as well as soar. The pride of no person in a flourishing condition is more justly to be dreaded than that of him who is mean and cringing under a doubtful and unprosperous fortune. But it seems it was thought necessary to give some out-of-the-way proofs of our sincerity, as well as of our freedom from ambition. Is then fraud and falsehood become the distinctive character of Englishmen? Whenever your enemy chooses to accuse you of perfidy and ill faith, will you put it into his power to throw you into the purgatory of self-humiliation? Is his charge equal to the finding of the grand jury of Europe, and sufficient to put you upon your trial? But on that trial I will defend the English ministry. I am sorry that on some points I have, on the principles I have always opposed, so good a defence to make. They were not the first to begin the war. They did not excite the general confederacy in Europe, which was so properly formed on the alarm given by the jacobinism of France. They did not begin with an hostile aggression on the regicides or any of their allies. These parricides of their own country, disciplining themselves for foreign by domestick violence,

violence, were the first to attack a power that was our ally, by nature, by habit, and by the sanction of multiplied treaties. Is it not true that they were the first to declare war upon this kingdom? Is every word in the declaration from Downing-street, concerning their conduct, and concerning ours and that of our allies, so obviously false that it is necessary to give some new invented proofs of our good faith in order to expunge the memory of all this perfidy?

We know that over-labouring a point of this kind, has the direct contrary effect from what we wish. We know that there is a legal presumption against men *quando se nimis purgitant;* and if a charge of ambition is not refuted by an affected humility, certainly the character of fraud and perfidy is still less to be washed away by indications of meanness. Fraud and prevarication are servile vices. They sometimes grow out of the necessities, always out of the habits of slavish and degenerate spirits: and on the theatre of the world, it is not by assuming the mask of a Davus or a Geta that an actor will obtain credit for manly simplicity and a liberal openness of proceeding. It is an erect countenance; it is a firm adherence to principle; it is a power of resisting false shame and frivolous fear, that assert our good faith and honour, and assure to us the confidence of mankind. Therefore all these negotiations, and all the declarations with which they

they were preceded and followed, can only serve to raise presumptions against that good faith and publick integrity, the fame of which to preserve inviolate is so much the interest and duty of every nation.

The pledge is an engagement "to all Europe." This is the more extraordinary, because it is a pledge, which no power in Europe, whom I have yet heard of, has thought proper to require at our hands. I am not in the secrets of office; and therefore I may be excused for proceeding upon probabilities and exterior indications. I have surveyed all Europe from the east to the west, from the north to the south, in search of this call upon us to purge ourselves of "subtle *duplicity* and a *punick* style" in our proceedings. I have not heard that his excellency the Ottoman ambassador has expressed his doubts of the British sincerity in our negotiation with the most unchristian republick lately set up at our door. What sympathy, in that quarter, may have introduced a remonstrance upon the want of faith in this nation, I cannot positively say. If it exists, it is in Turkish or Arabick, and possibly is not yet translated. But none of the nations which compose the old Christian world have I yet heard as calling upon us for those judicial purgations and ordeals, by fire and water, which we have chosen to go through;—for the other great proof, by battle, we seem to decline.

For whose use, entertainment, or instruction, are all those overstrained and over-laboured proceedings in council, in negotiation, and in speeches in parliament, intended? What royal cabinet is to be enriched with these high-finished pictures of the arrogance of the sworn enemies of kings, and the meek patience of a British administration? In what heart is it intended to kindle pity towards our multiplied mortifications and disgraces? At best it is superfluous. What nation is unacquainted with the haughty disposition of the common enemy of all nations? It has been more than seen, it has been felt; not only by those who have been the victims of their imperious rapacity, but, in a degree, by those very powers who have consented to establish this robbery, that they might be able to copy it, with the impunity to make new usurpations of their own. The king of Prussia has hypothecated in trust to the regicides his rich and fertile territories on the Rhine, as a pledge of his zeal and affection to the cause of liberty and equality. He has seen them robbed with unbounded liberty, and with the most levelling equality. The woods are wasted; the country is ravaged; property is confiscated; and the people are put to bear a double yoke, in the exactions of a tyrannical government and in the contributions of an hostile irruption. Is it to satisfy the court of Berlin, that the court of London is to give the same sort of pledge of its

sincerity

sincerity and good faith to the French directory? It is not that heart full of sensibility,—it is not Lucchesini, the minister of his Prussian Majesty, the late ally of England, and the present ally of its enemy, who has demanded this pledge of our sincerity, as the price of renewal of the long lease of his sincere friendship to this kingdom.

It is not to our enemy, the now faithful ally of regicide, late the faithful ally of Great Britain, the Catholick king, that we address our doleful lamentation: it is not to the *Prince of Peace*, whose declaration of war was one of the first auspicious omens of general tranquillity, which our dove-like ambassador, with the olive-branch in his beak, was saluted with at his entrance into the ark of clean birds at Paris.

Surely it is not to the Tetrarch of Sardinia, now the faithful ally of a power who has seized upon all his fortresses, and confiscated the oldest dominions of his house; it is not to this once powerful, once respected, and once cherished ally of Great Britain, that we mean to prove the sincerity of the peace which we offered to make at his expence. Or is it to him we are to prove the arrogance of the power who, under the name of friend, oppresses him, and the poor remains of his subjects, with all the ferocity of the most cruel enemy?

It is not to Holland, under the name of an ally, laid under a permanent military contribution, filled

with their double garrison of barbarous jacobin troops, and ten times more barbarous jacobin clubs and assemblies, that we find ourselves obliged to give this pledge.

Is it to Genoa, that we make this kind promise; a state which the regicides were to defend in a favourable neutrality, but whose neutrality has been, by the gentle influence of jacobin authority, forced into the trammels of an alliance; whose alliance has been secured by the admission of French garrisons; and whose peace has been for ever ratified by a forced declaration of war against ourselves?

It is not the grand-duke of Tuscany who claims this declaration; not the grand duke, who for his early sincerity, for his love of peace, and for his entire confidence in the amity of the assassins of his house, has been complimented in the British parliament with the name of "*the wisest sovereign in* "*Europe:*"—It is not this pacifick Solomon, or his philosophick cudgelled ministry, cudgelled by English and by French, whose wisdom and philosophy between them, have placed Leghorn in the hands of the enemy of the Austrian family, and driven the only profitable commerce of Tuscany from its only port. It is not this sovereign, a far more able statesman than any of the *Medici* in whose chair he sits: it is not the philosopher *Carletti*, more ably speculative than *Galileo*, more profoundly politick than *Machiavel*, that call upon us so loudly to give the

the same happy proofs of the same good faith to the republick, always the same, always one an indivisible.

It is not Venice, whose principal cities the enemy has appropriated to himself, and scornfully desired the state to indemnify itself from the emperour, that we wish to convince of the pride and the despotism of an enemy, who loads us with his scoffs and buffets.

It is not for his holiness we intend this consolatory declaration of our own weakness, and of the tyrannous temper of his grand enemy. That prince has known both the one and the other from the beginning. The artists of the French revolution, had given their very first essays and sketches of robbery and desolation against his territories, in a far more cruel "murdering piece" than had ever entered into the imagination of painter or poet. Without ceremony they tore from his cherishing arms, the possessions which he held for five hundred years, undisturbed by all the ambition of all the ambitious monarchs who, during that period, have reigned in France. Is it to him, in whose wrong we have in our late negotiation ceded his now unhappy countries near the Rhone, lately amongst the most flourishing (perhaps the most flourishing for their extent) of all the countries upon earth, that we are to prove the sincerity of our resolution to make peace with the republick of barbarism? That venerable

venerable potentate and pontiff, is sunk deep into the vale of years; he is half disarmed by his peaceful character; his dominions are more than half disarmed by a peace of two hundred years, defended as they were, not by force but by reverence; yet in all these straits, we see him display, amidst the recent ruins and the new defacements of his plundered capital, along with the mild and decorated piety of the modern, all the spirit and magnanimity of antient Rome! Does he, who, though himself unable to defend them, nobly refused to receive pecuniary compensations for the protection he owed to his people of Avignon, Carpentras, and the Venaisin;—does he want proofs of our good disposition to deliver over that people without any security for them, or any compensation to their sovereign, to this cruel enemy? Does he want to be satisfied of the sincerity of our humiliation to France, who has seen his free, fertile and happy city and state of Bologna, the cradle of regenerated law, the seat of sciences and of arts, so hideously metamorphosed, whilst he was crying to Great Britain for aid, and offering to purchase that aid at any price? Is it him, who sees that chosen spot of plenty and delight converted into a jacobin ferocious republick, dependent on the homicides of France? Is it him, who, from the miracles of his beneficent industry, has done a work which defied the power of the Roman emperors, though with an enthralled

enthralled world to labour for them; is it him, who has drained and cultivated the *Pontine Marshes*, that we are to satisfy of our cordial spirit of conciliation, with those who, in their equity, are restoring Holland again to the seas, whose maxims poison more than the exhalations of the most deadly fens, and who turn all the fertilities of nature and of art, into an howling desart? Is it to him, that we are to demonstrate the good faith of our submissions to the cannibal republick; to him who is commanded to deliver into their hands Ancona and Civita Vecchia, seats of commerce, raised by the wise and liberal labours and expences of the present and late pontiffs; ports not more belonging to the Ecclesiastical State than to the commerce of Great Britain; thus wresting from his hands the power of the keys of the centre of Italy, as before they had taken possession of the keys of the northern part, from the hands of the unhappy king of Sardinia, the natural ally of England? Is it to him we are to prove our good faith in the peace which we are soliciting to receive from the hands of his and our robbers, the enemies of all arts, all sciences, all civilization, and all commerce?

Is it to the Cispadane or to the Transpadane republicks, which have been forced to bow under the galling yoke of French liberty, that we address all these pledges of our sincerity and love of peace with their unnatural parents?

Are

Are we by this declaration to satisfy the king of Naples whom we have left to struggle as he can, after our abdication of Corsica, and the flight of the whole naval force of England out of the whole circuit of the Mediterranean, abandoning our allies, our commerce, and the honour of a nation, once the protectress of all other nations, because strengthened by the independence, and enriched by the commerce of them all? By the express provisions of a recent treaty, we had engaged with the king of Naples to keep a naval force in the Mediterranean. But, good God! was a treaty at all necessary for this? The uniform policy of this kingdom as a state, and eminently so as a commercial state, has at all times led us to keep a powerful squadron and a commodious naval station in that central sea, which borders upon, and which connects, a far greater number and variety of states, European, Asiatick, and African, than any other. Without such a naval force France must become despotick mistress of that sea, and of all the countries whose shores it washes. Our commerce must become vassal on her and dependent on her will. Since we are come no longer to trust to our force in arms, but to our dexterity in negotiation, and begin to pay a desperate court to a proud and coy usurpation, and have finally sent an ambassador to the Bourbon regicides at Paris; the king of Naples, who saw, that no reliance was to be placed on our engagements,

engagements, or on any pledge of our adherence to our nearest and dearest interests, has been obliged to send his ambassador also to join the rest of the squalid tribe of the representatives of degraded kings. This monarch, surely, does not want any proof of the sincerity of our amicable dispositions to that amicable republick, into whose arms he has been given by our desertion of him.

To look to the powers of the north, it is not to the Danish ambassador, insolently treated, in his own character and in ours, that we are to give proofs of the regicide arrogance, and of our disposition to submit to it.

With regard to Sweden, I cannot say much. The French influence is struggling with her independence; and they who consider the manner in which the ambassador of that power was treated not long since at Paris, and the manner in which the father of the present king of Sweden (himself the victim of regicide principles and passions) would have looked on the present assassins of France, will not be very prompt to believe that the young king of Sweden has made this kind of requisition to the king of Great Britain, and has given this kind of auspice of his new government.

I speak last of the most important of all. It certainly was not the last empress of Russia at whose instance we have given this pledge. It is not the new emperour, the inheritor of so much glory, and placed in a situation of so much delicacy, and difficulty

culty for the preservation of that inheritance, who calls on England, the natural ally of his dominions, to deprive herself of her power of action, and to bind herself to France. France at no time, and in none of its fashions, least of all in its last, has been ever looked upon as the friend either of Russia or of Great Britain. Every thing good, I trust, is to be expected from this prince; whatever may be without authority, given out of an influence over his mind possessed by that only potentate, from whom he has any thing to apprehend, or with whom he has much even to discuss.

This sovereign knows, I have no doubt, and feels, on what sort of bottom is to be laid the foundation of a Russian throne. He knows what a rock of native granite is to form the pedestal of his statue, who is to emulate Peter the Great. His renown will be in continuing with ease and safety, what his predecessor was obliged to achieve through mighty struggles. He is sensible, that his business is not to innovate, but to secure and to establish; that reformations at this day are attempts at best of ambiguous utility. He will revere his father with the piety of a son; but in his government he will imitate the policy of his mother. His father, with many excellent qualities, had a short reign; because, being a native Russian, he was unfortunately advised to act in the spirit of a foreigner. His mother reigned over Russia three and thirty years with the greatest glory; because, with the disadvantage of

of being a foreigner born, she made herself a Russian. A wise prince like the present will improve his country; but it will be cautiously and progressively, upon its own native ground-work of religion, manners, habitudes, and alliances. If I prognosticate right, it is not the emperour of Russia that ever will call for extravagant proofs of our desire to reconcile ourselves to the irreconcileable enemy of all thrones.

I do not know why I should not include America among the European powers, because she is of European origin; and has not yet, like France, destroyed all traces of manners, laws, opinions, and usages which she drew from Europe. As long as that Europe shall have any possessions either in the southern or the northern parts of that America, even separated as it is by the ocean, it must be considered as a part of the European system. It is not America, menaced with internal ruin from the attempts to plant jacobinism instead of liberty in that country; it is not America, whose independence is directly attacked by the French, the enemies of the independence of all nations, that calls upon us to give security by disarming ourselves in a treacherous peace. By such a peace, we shall deliver the Americans, their liberty, and their order, without resource, to the mercy of their imperious allies, who will have peace or neutrality with

no

no state, which is not ready to join her in war against England.

Having run round the whole circle of the European system wherever it acts, I must affirm, that all the foreign powers who are not leagued with France for the utter destruction of all balance through Europe and throughout the world, demand other assurances from this kingdom than are given in that declaration. They require assurances, not of the sincerity of our good dispositions towards the usurpation in France, but of our affection towards the college of the ancient states of Europe, and pledges of our constancy, our fidelity, and of our fortitude in resisting to the last the power that menaces them all. The apprehension from which they wish to be delivered cannot be from any thing they dread in the ambition of England. Our power must be their strength. They hope more from us than they fear. I am sure the only ground of their hope, and of our hope, is in the greatness of mind hitherto shewn by the people of this nation, and its adherence to the unalterable principles of its ancient policy, whatever government may finally prevail in France. I have entered into this detail of the wishes and expectations of the European powers, in order to point out more clearly, not so much what their disposition, as (a consideration of far greater importance) what their situation demands, according

according as that situation is related to the regicide republick and to this kingdom.

Then if it is not to satisfy the foreign powers we make this assurance, to what power at home is it that we pay all this humiliating court? Not to the old whigs or to the ancient tories of this kingdom; if any memory of such ancient divisions still exists amongst us. To which of the principles of these parties is this assurance agreeable? Is it to the whigs we are to recommend the aggrandizement of France, and the subversion of the balance of power? Is it to the tories we are to recommend our eagerness to cement ourselves with the enemies of royalty and religion? But if these parties, which by their dissentions have so often distracted the kingdom, which by their union have once saved it, and which by their collision and mutual resistance, have preserved the variety of this constitution in its unity, be (as I believe they are) nearly extinct by the growth of new ones, which have their roots in the present circumstances of the times—I wish to know, to which of these new descriptions this declaration is addressed? It can hardly be to those persons, who, in the new distribution of parties, consider the conservation in England of the ancient order of things, as necessary to preserve order every where else, and who regard the general conservation of order in other countries, as reciprocally necessary to preserve the same state of things in these islands.

 That

That party never can wish to see Great Britain pledge herself to give the lead and the ground of advantage and superiority to the France of to-day, in any treaty which is to settle Europe. I insist upon it, that so far from expecting such an engagement, they are generally stupefied and confounded with it. That the other party which demands great changes here, and is so pleased to see them every where else, which party I call jacobin, that this faction does from the bottom of its heart, approve the declaration, and does erect its crest upon the engagement, there can be little doubt. To them it may be addressed with propriety, for it answers their purposes in every point.

The party in opposition within the house of lords and commons, it is irreverent, and half a breach of privilege (far from my thoughts) to consider as jacobin. This party has always denied the existence of such a faction; and has treated the machinations of those, whom you and I call jacobins, as so many forgeries and fictions of the minister and his adherents, to find a pretext for destroying freedom, and setting up an arbitrary power in this kingdom. However, whether this minority has a leaning towards the French system, or only a charitable toleration of those who lean that way, it is certain, that they have always attacked the sincerity of the minister in the same modes, and on the very same grounds, and nearly in the same terms, with the

directory

directory. It must, therefore, be at the tribunal of the minority, (from the whole tenour of the speech) that the minister appeared to consider himself obliged to purge himself of duplicity. It was at their bar that he held up his hand. It was on their *sellette* that he seemed to answer interrogatories; it was on their principles that he defended his whole conduct. They certainly take what the French call the *haute du pavé*. They have loudly called for the negotiation. It was accorded to them. They engaged their support of the war with vigour, in case peace was not granted on honourable terms. Peace was not granted on any terms, honourable or shameful. Whether these judges, few in number but powerful in jurisdiction, are satisfied; whether they to whom this new pledge is hypothecated, have redeemed their own; whether they have given one particle more of their support to ministry, or even favoured them with their good opinion, or their candid construction, I leave it to those who recollect that memorable debate, to determine.

The fact is, that neither this declaration, nor the negotiation which is its subject, could serve any one good purpose, foreign or domestick; it could conduce to no end either with regard to allies or neutrals. It tends neither to bring back the misled; nor to give courage to the fearful; nor to

animate

animate and confirm those, who are hearty and zealous in the cause.

I hear it has been said (though I can scarcely believe it) by a distinguished person in an assembly, where if there be less of the torrent and tempest of eloquence, more guarded expression is to be expected, that, indeed, there was no just ground of hope in this business from the beginning.

It is plain, that this noble person, however conversant in negotiation, having been employed in no less than four embassies, and in two hemispheres, and in one of those negotiations having fully experienced what it was to proceed to treaty without previous encouragement, was not at all consulted in this experiment. For his majesty's principal minister declared, on the very same day, in another house, "his majesty's deep and sincere "regret at its unfortunate and abrupt termination, "so different from the wishes and *hopes* that were "entertained;"—and in other parts of the speech speaks of this abrupt termination as a great disappointment, and as a fall from sincere endeavours and sanguine expectation. Here are, indeed, sentiments diametrically opposite, as to the hopes with which the negotiation was commenced and carried on, and what is curious is, the grounds of the hopes on the one side, and the despair on the other, are exactly the same. The logical conclusion from the common premises, is indeed in favour of

of the noble lord, for they are agreed that the enemy was far from giving the least degree of countenance to any such hopes; and that they proceeded, in spite of every discouragement which the enemy had thrown in their way. But there is another material point in which they do not seem to differ; that is to say, the result of the desperate experiment of the noble lord, and of the promising attempt of the great minister, in satisfying the people of England, and in causing discontent to the people of France; or, as the minister expresses it, "in uniting England and in dividing France."

For my own part, though I perfectly agreed with the noble lord, that the attempt was desperate, so desperate indeed, as to deserve *his* name of an experiment, yet no fair man can possibly doubt, that the minister was perfectly sincere in his proceeding, and that, from his ardent wishes for peace with the regicides, he was led to conceive hopes which were founded rather in his vehement desires than in any rational ground of political speculation. Convinced as I am of this, it had been better, in my humble opinion, that persons of great name and authority had abstained from those topicks which had been used to call the minister's sincerity into doubt, and had not adopted the sentiments of the directory upon the subject of all our negotiations; for the noble lord expressly says, that the experiment was made for the satisfaction

of the country. The directory says exactly the same thing. Upon granting, in consequence of our supplications, the passport to lord Malmesbury, in order to remove all sort of hope from its success, they charged all our previous steps, even to that moment of submissive demand to be admitted to their presence, on duplicity and perfidy; and assumed, that the object of all the steps we had taken, was that " of justifying the conti-
" nuance of the war in the eyes of the English
" nation, and of throwing all the odium of it upon
" the French:"—" The English nation (said they)
" supports impatiently the continuance of the war,
" and *a reply must be made to its complaints and its*
" *reproaches;* the parliament is about to be opened,
" *and the mouths of the orators who will declaim*
" *against the war must be shut; the demands for new*
" *taxes must be justified; and to obtain these results,*
" *it is necessary to be able to advance, that the*
" *French government refuses every reasonable pro-*
" *position for peace.*" I am sorry that the language of the friends to ministry and the enemies to mankind should be so much in unison.

As to the fact in which these parties are so well agreed, that the experiment ought to have been made for the satisfaction of this country, (meaning the country of England) it were well to be wished, that persons of eminence would cease to make themselves representatives of the people of England, without

without a letter of attorney, or any other act of procuration. In legal construction, the sense of the people of England is to be collected from the house of commons; and, though I do not deny the possibility of an abuse of this trust as well as any other, yet I think, that without the most weighty reasons, and in the most urgent exigencies, it is highly dangerous to suppose that the house speaks any thing contrary to the sense of the people, or that the representative is silent when the sense of the constituent strongly, decidedly, and upon long deliberation, speaks audibly upon any topick of moment. If there is a doubt, whether the house of commons represents perfectly the whole commons of Great Britain, (I think there is none) there can be no question but that the lords and the commons together represent the sense of the whole people to the crown, and to the world. Thus it is, when we speak legally and constitutionally. In a great measure, it is equally true, when we speak prudentially; but I do not pretend to assert, that there are no other principles to guide discretion than those which are or can be fixed by some law, or some constitution; yet before the legally presumed sense of the people should be superseded by a supposition of one more real (as in all cases, where a legal presumption is to be ascertained) some strong proofs ought to exist of a contrary disposition in the people at large, and some decisive

indications of their desire upon this subject. There can be no question, that previously to a direct message from the crown neither house of parliament did indicate any thing like a wish for such advances as we have made, or such negociations as we have carried on. The parliament has assented to ministry; it is not ministry that has obeyed the impulse of parliament. The people at large have their organs through which they can speak to parliament and to the crown by a respectful petition, and, though not with absolute authority, yet with weight, they can instruct their representatives. The freeholders and other electors in this kingdom have another, and a surer mode of expressing their sentiments concerning the conduct which is held by members of parliament. In the middle of these transactions, this last opportunity has been held out to them. In all these points of view, I positively assert, that the people have no where, and in no way, expressed their wish of throwing themselves and their sovereign at the feet of a wicked and rancorous foe, to supplicate mercy, which, from the nature of that foe, and from the circumstances of affairs, we had no sort of ground to expect. It is undoubtedly the business of ministers very much to consult the inclinations of the people, but they ought to take great care that they do not receive that inclination from the few persons who may happen to approach them. The

petty

petty interests of such gentlemen, their low conceptions of things, their fears arising from the danger to which the very arduous and critical situation of publick affairs may expose their places; their apprehensions from the hazards to which the discontents of a few popular men at elections may expose their seats in parliament; all these causes trouble and confuse the representations which they make to ministers of the real temper of the nation. If ministers, instead of following the great indications of the constitution, proceed on such reports, they will take the whispers of a cabal for the voice of the people, and the counsels of imprudent timidity for the wisdom of a nation.

I well remember, that when the fortune of the war began, and it began pretty early, to turn, as it is common and natural, we were dejected by the losses that had been sustained, and with the doubtful issue of the contests that were foreseen. But not a word was uttered that supposed peace upon any proper terms, was in our power, or therefore that it should be in our desire. As usual, with or without reason, we criticised the conduct of the war, and compared our fortunes with our measures. The mass of the nation went no further. For I suppose that you always understood me as speaking of that very preponderating part of the nation, which had always been equally adverse to the French principles, and to the general progress of their

their revolution throughout Europe; considering the final success of their arms and the triumph of their principles as one and the same thing.

The first means that were used, by any one professing our principles, to change the minds of this party upon that subject, appeared in a small pamphlet circulated with considerable industry. It was commonly given to the noble person himself, who has passed judgment upon all hopes from negotiation, and justified our late abortive attempt only as an experiment made to satisfy the country; and yet that pamphlet led the way in endeavouring to dissatisfy that very country with the continuance of the war, and to raise in the people the most sanguine expectations from some such course of negotiation as has been fatally pursued. This leads me to suppose (and I am glad to have reason for supposing) that there was no foundation for attributing the performance in question to that author; but without mentioning his name in the title-page, it passed for his, and does still pass uncontradicted. It was entitled "Remarks on the apparent Circumstances of the War in the fourth Week of October, 1795."

This sanguine little king's-fisher (not prescient of the storm, as by his instinct he ought to be) appearing at that uncertain season, before the riggs of old Michaelmas were yet well composed, and when the inclement storms of winter were approaching,

approaching, began to flicker over the seas, and was busy in building its halcyon nest, as if the angry ocean had been soothed by the genial breath of May. Very unfortunately this auspice was instantly followed by a speech from the throne, in the very spirit and principles of that pamphlet.

I say nothing of the newspapers, which are undoubtedly in the interest, and which are supposed by some to be directly or indirectly under the influence of ministers, and which, with less authority than the pamphlet I speak of, had indeed for some time before held a similar language, in direct contradiction to their more early tone: in so much, that I can speak it with a certain assurance, that very many who wished to administration as well as you and I do, thought that in giving their opinion in favour of this peace, they followed the opinion of ministry—they were conscious that they did not lead it. My inference therefore is this, that the negotiation whatever its merits may be, in the general principle and policy of undertaking it, is, what every political measure in general ought to be, the sole work of administration; and that if it was an experiment to satisfy any body, it was to satisfy those, whom the ministers were in the daily habit of condemning, and by whom they were daily condemned; I mean, the *leaders* of the *opposition* in *parliament*. I am certain that the ministers were then, and are now, invested with the fullest

so truly described, rendered our solicitation not only degrading, but from the very outset evidently hopeless.

I find it asserted, and even a merit taken for it, "that this country surmounted every difficulty of "form and etiquette which the enemy had thrown "in our way." An odd way of surmounting a difficulty by cowering under it! I find it asserted that an heroick resolution had been taken, and avowed in parliament, previous to this negotiation, "that no consideration of etiquette should stand "in the way of it."

Etiquette, if I understand rightly the term, which in any extent is of modern usage, had its original application to those ceremonial and formal observances practised at courts, which had been established by long usage, in order to preserve the sovereign power from the rude intrusion of licentious familiarity, as well as to preserve majesty itself from a disposition to consult its ease at the expence of its dignity. The term came afterwards to have a greater latitude, and to be employed to signify certain formal methods used in the transactions between sovereign states.

In the more limited as well as in the larger sense of the term, without knowing what the etiquette is, it is impossible to determine whether it is a vain and captious punctilio, or a form necessary to preserve decorum in character and order in business.

ness. I readily admit, that nothing tends to facilitate the issue of all publick transactions more than a mutual disposition in the parties treating, to wave all ceremony. But the use of this temporary suspension of the recognised modes of respect consists in its being mutual, and in the spirit of conciliation in which all ceremony is laid aside. On the contrary, when one of the parties to a treaty intrenches himself up to the chin in these ceremonies, and will not, on his side, abate a single punctilio, and that all the concessions are upon one side only, the party so conceding does by this act place himself in a relation of inferiority, and thereby fundamentally subverts that equality which is of the very essence of all treaty.

After this formal act of degradation, it was but a matter of course, that gross insult should be offered toour ambassador, and that he should tamely submit to it. He found himself provoked to complain of the atrocious libels againts his publick character and his person, which appeared in a paper under the avowed patronage of that government. The regicide directory, on this complaint, did not recognise the paper; and that was all. They did not punish, they did not dismiss, they did not even reprimand the writer. As to our ambassador, this total want of reparations for the injury was passed by under the pretence of despising it.

In this, but too serious business, it is not possible here

here to avoid a smile. Contempt is not a thing to be despised. It may be borne with a calm and equal mind, but no man by lifting his head high can pretend that he does not perceive the scorns that are poured down upon him from above. All these sudden complaints of injury, and all these deliberate submissions to it, are the inevitable consequences of the situation in which we had placed ourselves; a situation wherein the insults were such as nature would not enable us to bear, and circumstances would not permit us to resent.

It was not long, however, after this contempt of contempt upon the part of our ambassador (who by the way represented his sovereign) that a new object was furnished for displaying sentiments of the same kind, though the case was infinitely aggravated. Not the ambassador, but the king himself was libelled and insulted; libelled, not by a creature of the directory, but by the directory itself. At least so lord Malmesbury understood it, and so he answered it in his note of the 12th December, 1796, in which he says, "With regard to the *offensive* "*and injurious* insinuations which are contained in "that paper, and which are only calculated to throw "new obstacles in the way of that accommodation, "which the French government profess to desire, "THE KING HAS DEEMED IT FAR BE-"NEATH HIS DIGNITY to permit an answer

"to

"to be made to them on his part, in any manner "whatsoever."

I am of opinion, that if his majesty had kept aloof from that wash and off-scouring of every thing that is low and barbarous in the world, it might be well thought unworthy of his dignity to take notice of such scurrilities. They must be considered as much the natural expression of that kind of animal, as it is the expression of the feelings of a dog to bark; but when the king had been advised to recognise not only the monstrous composition as a sovereign power, but in conduct, to admit something in it like a superiority; when the bench of regicide was made, at least, co-ordinate with his throne, and raised upon a platform full as elevated, this treatment could not be passed by under the appearance of despising it. It would not, indeed, have been proper to keep up a war of the same kind, but an immediate, manly, and decided resentment ought to have been the consequence. We ought not to have waited for the disgraceful dismissal of our ambassador. There are cases in which we may pretend to sleep: but the wittol rule has some sense in it, *Non omnibus dormio.* We might, however, have seemed ignorant of the affront; but what was the fact? Did we dissemble or pass it by in silence? When dignity is talked of, a language which I did not expect to hear in such a transaction, I must say what all the world

must

must feel, that it was not for the king's dignity to notice this insult, and not to resent it. This mode of proceeding is formed on new ideas of the correspondence between sovereign powers.

This was far from the only ill effect of the policy of degradation. The state of inferiority in which we were placed in this vain attempt at treaty, drove us headlong from errour into errour, and led us to wander far away, not only from the old paths which have been beaten in the old course of political communication between mankind, but out of the ways even of the most common prudence. Against all rules, after we had met nothing but rebuffs in return to all our proposals, we made *two confidential communications* to those in whom we had no confidence, and who reposed no confidence in us. What was worse, we were fully aware of the madness of the step we were taking. Ambassadors are not sent to a hostile power, persevering in sentiments of hostility, to make candid, confidential, and amicable communications. Hitherto the world has considered it as the duty of an ambassador in such a situation to be cautious, guarded, dexterous, and circumspect. It is true that mutual confidence and common interest dispense with all rules, smooth the rugged way, remove every obstacle, and make all things plain and level. When, in the last century, *Temple* and *De Witt* negotiated the famous triple alliance, their candour, their freedom, and the

the most *confidential* disclosures, were the result of true policy. Accordingly, in spite of all the dilatory forms of the complex government of the United Provinces, the treaty was concluded in three days. It did not take a much longer time to bring the same state (that of Holland) through a still more complicated transaction, that of the *Grand Alliance*. But in the present case, this unparalleled candour, this unpardonable want of reserve, produced what might have been expected from it, the most serious evils. It instructed the enemy in the whole plan of our demands and concessions. It made the most fatal discoveries.

And first, it induced us to lay down the basis of a treaty which itself had nothing to rest upon; it seems, we thought we had gained a great point in getting this basis admitted—that is, a basis of mutual compensation and exchange of conquests. If a disposition to peace, and with any reasonable assurance, had been previously indicated, such a plan of arrangement might with propriety and safety be proposed, because these arrangements were not, in effect, to make the basis, but a part of the superstructure of the fabrick of pacification. The order of things would thus be reversed. The mutual disposition to peace, would form the reasonable base upon which the scheme of compensation upon one side or other, might be constructed. This truly fundamental base being once laid, all differences

arising

arising from the spirit of huckstering and barter might be easily adjusted. If the restoration of peace, with a view to the establishment of a fair balance of power in Europe, had been made the real basis of the treaty, the reciprocal value of the compensations could not be estimated according to their proportion to each other, but according to their proportionate relation to that end: to that great end the whole would be subservient. The effect of the treaty would be in a manner secured before the detail of particulars was begun, and for a plain reason, because the hostile spirit on both sides had been conjured down; but if in the full fury, and unappeased rancour of war, a little traffick is attempted, it is easy to divine what must be the consequence to those who endeavoured to open that kind of petty commerce.

To illustrate what I have said, I go back no further than to the two last treaties of Paris, and to the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which preceded the first of these two treaties of Paris by about fourteen or fifteen years. I do not mean here to criticise any of them. My opinions upon some particulars of the treaty of Paris in 1763, are published in a pamphlet*, which your recollection will [illegible] lily bring into your view. I recur to them [illegible] y to that their basis had not been, [illegible] d ne[illegible] c been a mere dealing of truck [illegible]

* Observations on a late state of

the parties being willing, from common fatigue or common suffering, to put an end to a war, the first object of which had either been obtained or despaired of, the lesser objects were not thought worth the price of further contest. The parties understanding one another, so much was given away without considering from whose budget it came, not as the value of the objects, but as the value of peace to the parties might require. At the last treaty of Paris the subjugation of America being despaired of on the part of Great Britain, and the independence of America being looked upon as secure on the part of France, the main cause of the war was removed; and the conquests which France had made upon us (for we had made none of importance upon her) were surrendered with sufficient facility. Peace was restored as peace. In America the parties stood as they were possessed. A limit was to be settled, but settled as a limit to secure that peace, and not at all on a system of equivalents, for which, as we then stood with the United States, there were little or no materials.

At the preceding treaty of Paris, I mean that of 1763, there was nothing at all on which to fix a basis of compensation from reciprocal cession of conquests. They were all on one side. The question with us was not what we were to receive, and on what consideration, but what we were to keep for indemnity, or to cede for peace. Accordingly

no place being left for barter, sacrifices were made on our side to peace; and we surrendered to the French their most valuable possessions in the West Indies without any equivalent. The rest of Europe fell soon after into its ancient order; and the German war ended exactly where it had begun.

The treaty of Aix-la Chapelle was built upon a similar basis. All the conquests in Europe had been made by France. She had subdued the Austrian Netherlands, and broken open the gates of Holland. We had taken nothing in the West Indies, and Cape Breton was a trifling business indeed. France gave up all for peace. The allies had given up all that was ceded at Utrecht. Louis the fourteenth made all, or nearly all, the cessions at Ryswick, and at Nimeguen. In all those treaties, and in all the preceding, as well as in the others which intervened, the question never had been that of barter. The balance of power had been ever assumed as the known common law of Europe at all times, and by all powers: the question had only been (as it must happen) on the more or less inclination of that balance.

This general balance was regarded in four principal points of view:—the GREAT MIDDLE BALANCE, which comprehended Great Britain, France, and Spain; the BALANCE OF THE NORTH; the BALANCE, external and internal, of GERMANY; and the BALANCE OF ITALY. In all those systems of

 balance,

balance, England was the power to whose custody it was thought it might be most safely committed.

France, as she happened to stand, secured the balance, or endangered it. Without question she had been long the security for the balance of Germany, and under her auspices, the system, if not formed, had been at least perfected. She was so in some measure with regard to Italy, more than occasionally. She had a clear interest in the balance of the north, and had endeavoured to preserve it. But when we began to treat with the present France, or more properly to prostrate ourselves to her, and to try if we should be admitted to ransom our allies, upon a system of mutual concession and compensation, we had not one of the usual facilities. For first, we had not the smallest indication of a desire for peace on the part of the enemy; but rather the direct contrary. Men do not make sacrifices to obtain what they do not desire: and as for the balance of power, it was so far from being admitted by France either on the general system, or with regard to the particular systems that I have mentioned, that in the whole body of their authorized or encouraged reports and discussions upon the theory of the diplomatick system, they constantly rejected the very idea of the balance of power, and treated it as the true cause of all the wars and calamities that had afflicted Europe: and their practice was correspondent to the dogmatick

positions

positions they had laid down. The Empire and the Papacy it was their great object to destroy, and this now openly avowed and stedfastly acted upon, might have been discerned with very little acuteness of sight, from the very first dawnings of the revolution, to be the main drift of their policy. For they professed a resolution to destroy every thing which can hold states together by the tie of opinion.

Exploding, therefore, all sorts of balances, they avow their design to erect themselves into a new description of empire, which is not grounded on any balance, but forms a sort of impious hierarchy, of which France is to be the head and the guardian. The law of this their empire is any thing rather than the publick law of Europe, the ancient conventions of its several states, or the ancient opinions which assign to them superiority or pre-eminence of any sort, or any other kind of connection in virtue of ancient relations. They permit, and that is all, the temporary existence of some of the old communities; but whilst they give to these tolerated states this temporary respite in order to secure them in a condition of real dependence on themselves, they invest them on every side by a body of republicks, formed on the model, and dependent ostensibly, as well as substantially, on the will of the mother republick, to which they owe their origin. These are to be so many garrisons to check and

 control

control the states, which are to be permitted to remain on the old model, until they are ripe for a change. It is in this manner, that France, on her new system, means to form an universal empire, by producing an universal revolution. By this means, forming a new code of communities according to what she calls the natural rights of man and of states, she pretends to secure eternal peace to the world, guaranteed by her generosity and justice, which are to grow with the extent of her power. To talk of the balance of power to the governours of such a country, was a jargon which they could not understand even through an interpreter. Before men can transact any affair, they must have a common language to speak, and some common recognised principles on which they can argue, otherwise all is cross-purpose and confusion. It was, therefore, an essential preliminary to the whole proceeding, to fix, whether the balance of power, the liberties and laws of the empire, and the treaties of different belligerent powers in past times, when they put an end to hostilities, were to be considered as the basis of the present negotiation.

The whole of the enemy's plan was known when Lord Malmesbury was sent with his scrap of equivalents to Paris. Yet, in this unfortunate attempt at negotiation, instead of fixing these points, and assuming the balance of power and the peace of Europe as the basis to which all cessions on all sides

were

were to be subservient, our solicitor for peace was directed to reverse that order. He was directed to make mutual concessions, on a mere comparison of their remarkable value, the base of treaty. The balance of power was to be thrown in as an inducement, and a sort of make-weight to supply the manifest deficiency which must stare him and the world in the face, between those objects which he was to require the enemy to surrender, and those which he had to offer as a fair equivalent.

To give any force to this inducement, and to make it answer even a secondary purpose of equalizing equivalents having in themselves no natural proportionate value, it is supposed, that the enemy, contrary to the most notorious fact, did admit this balance of power to be of some value, great or small; whereas it is plain, that in the enemy's estimate of things, the consideration of the balance of power, as we have said before, was so far from going in diminution of the value of what the directory was desired to surrender, or of giving an additional price to our objects offered in exchange, that the hope of the utter destruction of that balance, became a new motive to the junto regicides for preserving, as a means for realising that hope, what we wished them to abandon.

Thus stood the basis of the treaty on laying the first stone of the foundation. At the very best, upon our side, the question stood upon a mere

naked

naked bargain and sale. Unthinking people here triumphed when they thought they had obtained it, whereas when obtained as a basis of treaty, it was just the worst we could possibly have chosen. As to our offer to cede a most unprofitable, and, indeed, beggarly, chargeable counting-house or two in the East Indies, we ought not to presume that they could consider this as any thing else than a mockery. As to any thing of real value, we had nothing under Heaven to offer (for which we were not ourselves in a very dubious struggle) except the iland of Martinico only. When this object was to be weighed against the directorial conquests, merely as an object of a value at market, the principle of barter became perfectly ridiculous; a single quarter in the single city of Amsterdam was worth ten Martinicos; and would have sold for many more years purchase in any market overt in Europe. How was this gross and glaring defect in the objects of exchange to be supplied?—It was to be made up by argument. And what was that argument?—The extreme utility of possessions in the West Indies to the augmentation of the naval power of France. A very curious topick of argument to be proposed and insisted on by an ambassador of Great Britain. It is directly and plainly this—"Come, we know that of all things you wish a naval power, and it is natural you should, who wish to destroy the very sources of the British greatness,

ness, to overpower our marine, to destroy our commerce, to eradicate our foreign influence, and to lay us open to an invasion, which, at one stroke, may complete our servitude and ruin, and expunge us from among the nations of the earth. Here I have it in my budget, the infallible arcanum for that purpose. You are but novices in the art of naval resources. Let you have the West Indies back, and your maritime preponderance is secured, for which you would do well to be moderate in your demands upon the Austrian Netherlands."

Under any circumstances, this a most extraordinary topick of argument; but it is rendered by much the more unaccountable, when we are told, that if the war has been diverted from the great object of establishing society and good order in Europe by destroying the usurpation in France; this diversion was made to increase the naval resources and power of Great Britain, and to lower, if not annihilate, those of the marine of France. I leave all this to the very serious reflection of every Englishman.

This basis was no sooner admitted, than the rejection of a treaty upon that sole foundation was a thing of course. The enemy did not think it worthy of a discussion, as in truth it was not; and immediately as usual, they began, in the most opprobrious, and most insolent manner, to question our sincerity and good faith. Whereas, in truth, there

was

was no one symptom wanting of openness and fair dealing. What could be more fair than to lay open to an enemy all that you wished to obtain, and the price you meant to pay for it, and to desire him to imitate your ingenuous proceeding, and in the same manner to open his honest heart to you? Here was no want of fair dealing, but there was too evidently a fault of another kind; there was much weakness—there was an eager and impotent desire of associating with this unsocial power, and of attempting the connection by any means, however manifestly feeble and ineffectual. The event was committed to chance; that is, to such a manifestation of the desire of France for peace, as would induce the directory to forget the advantages they had in the system of barter. Accordingly the general desire for such a peace was triumphantly reported from the moment that Lord Malmesbury had set his foot on shore at Calais.

It has been said, that the directory was compelled against its will to accept the basis of barter (as if that had tended to accelerate the work of pacification!) by the voice of all France. Had this been the case, the directors would have continued to listen to that voice to which it seems they were so obedient: they would have proceeded with the negociation upon that basis. But the fact is, that they instantly broke up the negotiation, as soon as they had obliged our ambassador to violate all the

principles

principles of treaty, and weakly, rashly, and unguardedly to expose, without any counter-proposition, the whole of our project with regard to ourselves and our allies, and without holding out the smallest hope that they would admit the smallest part of our pretensions.

When they had thus drawn from us all that they could draw out, they expelled Lord Malmesbury, and they appealed for the propriety of their conduct, to that very France which, we thought proper to suppose, had driven them to this fine concession; and I do not find that in either division of the family of thieves, the younger branch, or the elder, or in any other body whatsoever, there was any indignation excited, or any tumult raised; or any thing like the virulence of opposition which was shewn to the king's ministers here, on account of that transaction.

Notwithstanding all this, it seems a hope is still entertained, that the directory will have that tenderness for the carcase of their country, by whose very distemper, and on whose festering wounds, like vermin, they are fed; that these pious patriots will of themselves come into a more moderate and reasonable way of thinking and acting. In the name of wonder, what has inspired our ministry with this hope any more than with their former expectations?

Do

Do these hopes only arise from continual disappointment? Do they grow out of the usual grounds of despair? What is there to encourage them, in the conduct, or even in the declarations of the ruling powers in France, from the first formation of their mischievous republick to the hour in which I write? Is not the directory composed of the same junto? Are they not the identical men, who, from the base and sordid vices which belonged to their original place and situation, aspired to the dignity of crimes; and from the dirtiest, lowest, most fraudulent, and most knavish of chicaners, ascended in the scale of robbery, sacrilege, and assassination in all its forms, till at last they had imbrued their impious hands in the blood of their sovereign? Is it from these men that we are to hope for this paternal tenderness to their country, and this sacred regard for the peace and happiness of all nations!

But it seems there is still another lurking hope, akin to that which duped us so egregiously before, when our delightful basis was accepted; we still flatter ourselves that the publick voice of France will compel this directory to more moderation. Whence does this hope arise? What publick voice is there in France? There are, indeed, some writers, who, since this monster of a directory has obtained a great regular military force to guard them, are indulged in a sufficient liberty of writing, and

and some of them write well undoubtedly. But the world knows that in France there is no publick, that the country is composed but of two descriptions; audacious tyrants and trembling slaves. The contests between the tyrants is the only vital principle that can be discerned in France. The only thing which there appears like spirit, is amongst their late associates, and fastest friends of the directory, the more furious and untameable part of the jacobins. This discontented member of the faction does almost balance the reigning divisions; and it threatens every moment to predominate. For the present, however, the dread of their fury forms some sort of security to their fellows, who now exercise a more regular, and therefore a somewhat less ferocious tyranny. Most of the slaves choose a quiet, however reluctant submission to those who are somewhat satiated with blood, and who, like wolves, are a little more tame from being a little less hungry, in preference to an irruption of the famished devourers, who are prowling and howling about the fold.

This circumstance assures some degree of permanence to the power of those, whom we know to be permanently our rancorous and implacable enemies. But to those very enemies, who have sworn our destruction, we have ourselves given a further and far better security by rendering the cause

cause of the royalists desperate. Those brave and virtuous, but unfortunate adherents to the ancient constitution of their country, after the miserable slaughters which have been made in that body, after all their losses by emigration, are still numerous, but unable to exert themselves against the force of the usurpation, evidently countenanced and upheld by those very princes who had called them to arm for the support of the legal monarchy. Where then, after chacing these fleeting hopes of ours from point to point of the political horizon, are they at last really found? Not where, under Providence, the hopes of Englishmen used to be placed, in our own courage and in our own virtues, but in the moderation and virtue of the most atrocious monsters that have ever disgraced and plagued mankind.

The only excuse to be made for all our mendicant diplomacy is the same as in the case of all other mendicancy;—namely, that it has been founded on absolute necessity. This deserves consideration. Necessity, as it has no law, so it has no shame; but moral necessity is not like metaphysical, or even physical. In that category it is a word of loose signification, and conveys different ideas to different minds. To the low-minded, the slightest necessity becomes an invincible necessity. "The slothful man saith, There "is a lion in the way, and I shall be devoured in

"the

"the streets." But when the necessity pleaded is not in the nature of things, but in the vices of him who alleges it, the whining tones of common-place beggarly rhetorick, produce nothing but indignation; because they indicate a desire of keeping up a dishonourable existence, without utility to others, and without dignity to itself; because they aim at obtaining the dues of labour without industry; and by frauds would draw from the compassion of others, what men ought to owe to their own spirit and their own exertions.

I am thoroughly satisfied that if we degrade ourselves, it is the degradation which will subject us to the yoke of necessity, and not that it is necessity, which has brought on our degradation. In this same chaos, where light and darkness are struggling together, the open subscription of last year, with all its circumstances, must have given us no little glimmering of hope; not (as I have heard, it was vainly discoursed) that the loan could prove a crutch to a lame negotiation abroad; and that the whiff and wind of it must at once have disposed the enemies of all tranquillity to a desire for peace. Judging on the face of facts, if on them it had any effect at all, it had the direct contrary effect; for very soon after the loan became publick at Paris, the negotiation ended, and our ambassador was ignominiously expelled. My view of this was different: I liked the loan, not from

the

the influence which it might have on the enemy, but on account of the temper which it indicated in our own people. This alone is a consideration of any importance; because, all calculation formed upon a supposed relation of the habitudes of others to our own, under the present circumstances, is weak and fallacious. The adversary must be judged, not by what we are, or by what we wish him to be, but by what we must know he actually is: unless we choose to shut our eyes and our ears to the uniform tenour of all his discourses, and to his uniform course in all his actions. We may be deluded; but we cannot pretend that we have been disappointed. The old rule of, *Ne te quæsiveris extra*, is a precept as available in policy as it is in morals. Let us leave off speculating upon the disposition and the wants of the enemy. Let us descend into our own bosoms; let us ask ourselves what are our duties and what are our means of discharging them. In what heart are you at home? How far may an English minister confide in the affections, in the confidence, in the force of an English people? What does he find us when he puts us to the proof of what English interest and English honour demand? It is, as furnishing an answer to these questions that I consider the circumstances of the loan. The effect on the enemy is not in what he may speculate on our resources, but in what he shall feel from our arms.

The

The circumstances of the loan have proved beyond a doubt three capital points, which, if they are properly used, may be advantageous to the future liberty and happiness of mankind. In the first place, the loan demonstrates, in regard to instrumental resources, the competency of this kingdom to the assertion of the common cause, and to the maintenance and superintendance of that, which it is its duty, and its glory to hold, and to watch over—the balance of power throughout the christian world. Secondly, it brings to light what, under the most discouraging appearances, I always reckoned on; that with its ancient physical force, not only unimpaired, but augmented, its ancient spirit is still alive in the British nation. It proves, that for their application there is a spirit equal to the resources, for its energy above them. It proves that there exists though not always visible, a spirit which never fails to come forth whenever it is ritually invoked; a spirit which will give no equivocal response, but such as will hearten the timidity, and fix the irresolution of hesitating prudence; a spirit which will be ready to perform all the tasks that shall be imposed upon it by publick honour. Thirdly, the loan displays an abundant confidence in his Majesty's government, as administered by his present servants, in the prosecution of a war which the people consider, not as a war made on the suggestion of ministers, and to

answer

answer the purposes of the ambition or pride of statesmen, but as a war of their own, and in defence of that very property which they expend for its support; a war for that order of things, from which every thing valuable that they possess is derived, and in which order alone it can possibly be maintained.

I hear in derogation of the value of the fact, from which I draw inferences so favourable to the spirit of the people and to its just expectation from ministers, that the eighteen million loan is to be considered in no other light, than as taking advantage of a very lucrative bargain held out to the subscribers. I do not in truth believe it. All the circumstances which attended the subscription strongly spoke a different language. Be it, however, as these detractors say. This with me derogates little, or rather nothing at all, from the political value and importance of the fact. I should be very sorry if the transaction was not such a bargain, otherwise it would not have been a fair one. A corrupt and improvident loan, like every thing else corrupt or prodigal, cannot be too much condemned: but there is a short-sighted parsimony still more fatal than an unforeseeing expence. The value of money must be judged like every thing else from its rate at market. To force that market, or any market, is of all things the most dangerous. For a small temporary benefit, the spring of

of all publick credit might be relaxed for ever. The monied men have a right to look to advantage in the investment of their property. To advance their money, they risk it; and the risk is to be included in the price. If they were to incur a loss, that loss would amount to a tax on that peculiar species of property. In effect, it would be the most unjust and impolitick of all things, unequal taxation. It would throw upon one description of persons in the community, that burden which ought by fair and equitable distribution to rest upon the whole. None on account of their dignity should be exempt; none (preserving due proportion) on account of the scantiness of their means. The moment a man is exempted from the maintenance of the community, he is in a sort separated from it. He loses the place of a citizen.

So it is in all *taxation;* but in a *bargain*, when terms of loss are looked for by the borrower from the lender, compulsion, or what virtually is compulsion, introduces itself into the place of treaty. When compulsion may be at all used by a state in borrowing, the occasion must determine. But the compulsion ought to be known, and well defined, and well distinguished: for otherwise treaty only weakens the energy of compulsion, while compulsion destroys the freedom of a bargain. The advantage of both is lost by the confusion

without question, but not wholly so, nor any thing like it. If the income from the interest be spent, the above proportion returns again into the publick stock: insomuch, that taking the interest of the whole debt to be twelve millions three hundred thousand pound, (it is something more) not less than a sum of four million one hundred thousand pound comes back again to the publick through the channel of imposition. If the whole, or any part, of that income be saved, so much new capital is generated; the infallible operation of which is to lower the value of money, and consequently to conduce towards the improvement of publick credit.

I take the expenditure of the *capitalist*, not the value of the capital, as my standard because it is the standard upon which amongst us, property as an object of taxation, is rated. In this country, land and offices only excepted, we raise no faculty tax. We preserve the faculty from the expence. Our taxes, for the far greater portion, fly over the heads of the lowest classes. They escape too, who, with better ability, voluntarily subject themselves to the harsh discipline of a rigid necessity. With us, labour and frugality, the parents of riches, are spread, and wisely too. The moment men cease to augment the common stock, the moment they no longer enrich it by their industry or their self-denial, their luxury and even their ease are obliged to pay contribution to the publick; not because they

they are vicious principles but because they are unproductive. If in fact, the interest paid by the publick had not thus revolved again into its own fund; if this secretion had not again been absorbed into the mass of blood, it would have been impossible for the nation to have existed to this time under such a debt. But under the debt it does exist and flourish; and this flourishing state of existence in no small degree is owing to the contribution from the debt to the payment. Whatever, therefore, is taken from that capital by too close a bargain, is but a delusive advantage, it is so much lost to the publick in another way. This matter cannot on the one side or the other, be metaphysically pursued to the extreme, but it is a consideration of which, in all discussions of this kind, we ought never wholly to lose sight.

It is never, therefore, wise to quarrel with the interested views of men, whilst they are combined with the publick interest and promote it: it is our business to tie the knot, if possible, closer. Resources that are derived from extraordinary virtues, as such virtues are rare, so they must be unproductive. It is a good thing for a monied man to pledge his property on the welfare of his country; he shews that he places his treasure where his heart is; and, revolving in this circle, we know that "wherever "a man's treasure is, there his heart will be also." For these reasons and on these principles, I have been

been sorry to see the attempts which have been made, with more good meaning than foresight and consideration, towards raising the annual interest of this loan by private contributions. Wherever a regular revenue is established, there voluntary contribution can answer no purpose, but to disorder and disturb it in its course. To recur to such aids is, for so much to dissolve the community, and to return to a state of unconnected nature. And even if such a supply should be productive, in a degree commensurate to its object, it must also be productive of much vexation, and much oppression. Either the citizens, by the proposed duties, pay their proportion according to some rate made by publick authority, or they do not. If the law be well made, and the contributions founded on just proportions, every thing superadded by something that is not as regular as law, and as uniform in its operation, will become more or less out of proportion. If on the contrary, the law be not made upon proper calculation, it is a disgrace to the publick wisdom, which fails in skill to assess the citizen in just measure, and according to his means. But the hand of authority is not always the most heavy hand. It is obvious, that men may be oppressed by many ways, besides those which take their course from the supreme power of the state. Suppose the payment to be wholly discretionary. Whatever has its origin in caprice, is sure not to improve in

its

its progress, nor to end in reason. It is impossible for each private individual to have any measure conformable to the particular condition of each of his fellow-citizens, or to the general exigencies of his country. 'Tis a random shot at best.

When men proceed in this irregular mode, the first contributor is apt to grow peevish with his neighbours. He is but too well disposed to measure their means by his own envy, and not by the real state of their fortunes, which he can rarely know, and which it may in them be an act of the grossest imprudence to reveal. Hence the odium and lassitude, with which people will look upon a provision for the publick, which is bought by discord at the expence of social quiet. Hence the bitter heartburnings, and the war of tongues which is so often the prelude to other wars. Nor is it every contribution, called voluntary, which is according to the free will of the giver. A false shame, or a false glory, against his feelings, and his judgment, may tax an individual to the detriment of his family, and in wrong of his creditors. A pretence of publick spirit may disable him from the performance of his private duties. It may disable him even from paying the legitimate contributions which he is to furnish according to the prescript of law; but what is the most dangerous of all is, that malignant disposition to which this mode of contribution evidently tends, and which at length leaves

the

were under the pretext of relieving the more indigent classes, but the principle of voluntary contribution, however delusive, being once established, these lower classes first, and then all classes, were encouraged to throw off the regular methodical payments to the state as so many badges of slavery. Thus all regular revenue failing, these impostors raising the superstructure on the same cheats with which they had laid the foundation of their greatness, and not content with a portion of the possessions of the rich, confiscated the whole, and to prevent them from reclaiming their rights, murdered the proprietors. The whole of the process has passed before our eyes, and been conducted indeed with a greater degree of rapidity, than could be expected.

My opinion then is, that publick contributions ought only to be raised by the publick will. By the judicious form of our constitution, the publick contribution is in its name and substance a grant. In its origin it is truly voluntary; not voluntary according to the irregular, unsteady, capricious will of individuals, but according to the will and wisdom of the whole popular mass, in the only way in which will and wisdom can go together. This voluntary grant obtaining in its progress the force of a law, a general necessity which takes away all merit, and consequently all jealousy from individuals, compresses, equalizes, and satisfies the whole;

no, not for a single moment, for want of the necessary hands, either in the settled progress of husbandry, or in the occasional pressure of harvest. I have even reason to believe that there has been a much smaller importation, or the demand of it, from a neighbouring kingdom than in former times, when agriculture was more limited in its extent and its means, and when the time was a season of profound peace. On the contrary the prolifick fertility of country life has poured its superfluity of population into the canals, and into other publick works, which of late years have been undertaken to so amazing an extent, and which have not only not been discontinued, but beyond all expectation pushed on with redoubled vigour, in a war that calls for so many of our men, and so much of our riches. An increasing capital calls for labour: and an increasing population answers to the call. Our manufactures, augmented both for the supply of foreign and domestick consumption, reproducing with the means of life, the multitudes which they use and waste, (and which many of them devour much more surely and much more largely than the war) have always found the laborious hand ready for the liberal pay. That the price of the soldier is highly raised is true. In part this rise may be owing to some measures not so well considered in the beginning of this war; but the grand cause has been the reluctance

reluctance of that class of people from whom the soldiery is taken, to enter into a military life, not that but once entered into, it has its conveniences, and even its pleasures. I have seldom known a soldier who, at the intercession of his friends, and at their no small charge, had been redeemed from that discipline, that in a short time, was not eager to return to it again. But the true reason is the abundant occupation, and the augmented stipend found in towns, and villages, and farms, which leaves a smaller number of persons to be disposed of. The price of men for new and untried ways of life, must bear a proportion to the profits of that mode of existence from whence they are to be bought.

So far as to the stock of the common people as it consists in their persons. As to the other part, which consists in their earnings, I have to say, that the rates of wages are very greatly augmented almost through the kingdom. In the parish where I live, it has been raised from seven to nine shillings in the week for the same labourer, performing the same task and no greater. Except something in the malt taxes, and the duties upon sugars, I do not know any one tax imposed for very many years past which affects the labourer in any degree whatsoever; while on the other hand, the tax upon houses not having more than seven windows (that is, upon cottages) was repealed the very year before the commencement of the present war. On the

lately got from the *bon ton* of the humanity of this day, the name of the "*labouring poor*." We have heard many plans for the relief of the "*labouring poor*." This puling jargon is not as innocent as it is foolish. In meddling with great affairs weakness is never innoxious. Hitherto the name of poor (in the sense in which it is used to excite compassion) has not been used for those who can, but for those who cannot labour—for the sick and infirm; for orphan infancy; for languishing and decrepid age: but when we affect to pity as poor, those who must labour or the world cannot exist, we are trifling with the condition of mankind. It is the common doom of man that he must eat his bread by the sweat of his brow, that is, by the sweat of his body, or the sweat of his mind. If this toil was inflicted as a curse, it is as might be expected from the curses of the Father of all Blessings—it is tempered with many alleviations, many comforts. Every attempt to fly from it, and to refuse the very terms of our existence, becomes much more truly a curse, and heavier pains and penalties fall upon those who would elude the tasks which are put upon them by the great Master Workman of the World, who in his dealings with his creatures, sympathizes with their weakness, and speaking of a creation wrought by mere will out of nothing, speaks of six days of *labour* and one of *rest*. I do not call a healthy young man, chearful in his mind,

mind, and vigorous in his arms, I cannot call such a man, *poor;* I cannot pity my kind as a kind, merely because they are men. This affected pity, only tends to dissatisfy them with their condition, and to teach them to seek resources where no resources are to be found, in something else than their own industry, and frugality, and sobriety. Whatever may be the intention (which, because I do not know, I cannot dispute) of those who would discontent mankind by this strange pity, they act towards us in the consequences, as if they were our worst enemies.

In turning our view from the lower to the higher classes, it will not be necessary for me to shew at any length that the stock of the latter, as it consists in their numbers, has not yet suffered any material diminution. I have not seen or heard it asserted: I have no reason to believe it: there is no want of officers, that I have ever understood, for the new ships which we commission, or the new regiments which we raise. In the nature of things it is not with their persons, that the higher classes principally pay their contingent to the demands of war. There is another, and not less important, part which rests with almost exclusive weight upon them. They furnish the means,

> " ——————— How war may best uphold,
> " Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
> " In all her equipage."

Not that they are exempt from contributing also by their personal service in the fleets and armies of their country. They do contribute, and in their full and fair proportion, according to the relative proportion of their numbers in the community. They contribute all the mind that actuates the whole machine. The fortitude required of them, is very different from the unthinking alacrity of the common soldier, or common sailor, in the face of danger and death; it is not a passion, it is not an impulse, it is not a sentiment; it is a cool, steady, deliberate principle, always present, always equable; having no connexion with anger; tempering honour with prudence; incited, invigorated, and sustained by a generous love of fame; informed, moderated and directed by an enlarged knowledge of its own great publick ends; flowing in one blended stream from the opposite sources of the heart and the head; carrying in itself its own commission, and proving its title to every other command, by the first and most difficult command, that of the bosom in which it resides: it is a fortitude, which unites with the courage of the field the more exalted and refined courage of the council; which knows, as well to retreat as to advance; which can conquer as well by delay, as by the rapidity of a march, or the impetuosity of an attack; which can be, with Fabius, the black cloud that lowers on the tops of the mountains, or with Scipio, the thunderbolt of war; which undismayed

by

by false shame, can patiently endure the severest trial that a gallant spirit can undergo, in the taunts and provocations of the enemy, the suspicions, the cold respect, and "mouth-honour" of those, from whom it should meet a cheerful obedience; which undisturbed by false humanity, can calmly assume that most awful moral responsibility of deciding, when victory may be too dearly purchased by the loss of a single life, and when the safety and glory of their country may demand the certain sacrifice of thousands. Different stations of command may call for different modifications of this fortitude, but the character ought to be the same in all. And never, in the most "palmy state" of our martial renown, did it shine with brighter lustre, than in the present sanguinary and ferocious hostilities, wherever the British arms have been carried. But, in this most arduous, and momentous conflict, which from its nature should have roused us to new and unexampled efforts, I know not how it has been, that we have never put forth half the strength, which we have exerted in ordinary wars. In the fatal battles, which have drenched the continent with blood, and shaken the system of Europe to pieces, we have never had any considerable army of a magnitude to be compared to the least of those by which, in former times, we so gloriously asserted our place as protectors, not oppressors, at the head of the great commonwealth of Europe. We

have never manfully met the danger in front: and when the enemy, resigning to us our natural dominion of the ocean, and abandoning the defence of his distant possessions to the infernal energy of the destroying principles, which he had planted there for the subversion of the neighbouring colonies, drove forth by one sweeping law of unprecedented despotism, his armed multitudes on every side, to overwhelm the countries and states, which had for centuries stood the firm barriers against the ambition of France; we drew back the arm of our military force, which had never been more than half raised to oppose him. From that time we have been combating only with the other arm of our naval power; the right arm of England I admit; but which struck almost unresisted, with blows, that could never reach the heart of the hostile mischief. From that time, without a single effort to regain those outworks, which ever till now we so strenuously maintained, as the strong frontier of our own dignity and safety, no less than the liberties of Europe; with but one feeble attempt to succour those brave, faithful, and numerous allies, whom for the first time since the days of our Edwards and Henrys, we now have in the bosom of France itself; we have been intrenching, and fortifying, and garrisoning ourselves at home: we have been redoubling security on security, to protect ourselves from invasion, which has now first

become

become to us a serious object of alarm and terrour. Alas! the few of us, who have protracted life in any measure near to the extreme limits of our short period, have been condemned to see strange things; new systems of policy, new principles, and not only new men, but what might appear a new species of men. I believe that any person who was of age to take a part in publick affairs forty years ago (if the intermediate space of time were expunged from his memory) would hardly credit his senses, when he should hear from the highest authority, that an army of two hundred thousand men was kept up in this island, and that in the neighbouring island there were at least fourscore thousand more. But when he had recovered from his surprise on being told of this army, which has not its parallel, what must be his astonishment to be told again, that this mighty force was kept up for the mere purpose of an inert and passive defence, and that, in its far greater part, it was disabled by its constitution and very essence, from defending us against an enemy by any one preventive stroke, or any one operation of active hostility? What must his reflections be, on learning further, that a fleet of five hundred men of war, the best appointed, and to the full as ably commanded as this country ever had upon the sea, was for the greater part employed in carrying on the same system of unenterprising defence? What must be the sentiments and feelings

of

of one who remembers the former energy of England, when he is given to understand, that these two islands, with their extensive, and every where vulnerable coast, should be considered as a garrisoned sea-town; what would such a man, what would any man think, if the garrison of so strange a fortress should be such, and so feebly commanded, as never to make a sally; and that, contrary to all which has hitherto been seen in war, an infinitely inferiour army, with the shattered relicks of an almost annihilated navy, ill found, and ill manned, may with safety besiege this superiour garrison, and without hazarding the life of a man, ruin the place, merely by the menaces and false appearances of an attack? Indeed, indeed, my dear friend, I look upon this matter of our defensive system as much the most important of all considerations at this moment. It has oppressed me with many anxious thoughts, which, more than any bodily distemper, have sunk me to the condition, in which you know that I am. Should it please Providence to restore to me, even the late weak remains of my strength, I propose to make this matter the subject of a particular discussion. I only mean here to argue, that the mode of conducting the war on our part, be it good or bad, has prevented even the common havock of war in our population, and especially among that class, whose duty and privilege of superiority it is, to lead the

way

way amidst the perils and slaughter of the field of battle.

The other causes, which sometimes affect the numbers of the lower classes, but which I have shewn not to have existed to any such degree during this war,—penury, cold, hunger, nakedness,—do not easily reach the higher orders of society. I do not dread for them the slightest taste of these calamities from the distress and pressure of the war. They have much more to dread in that way from the confiscations, the rapines, the burnings, and the massacres that may follow in the train of a peace, which shall establish the devastating and depopulating principles and example of the French regicides, in security, and triumph and dominion. In the ordinary course of human affairs any check to population among men in ease and opulence, is less to be apprehended from what they may suffer, than from what they enjoy. Peace is more likely to be injurious to them in that respect than war. The excesses of delicacy, repose, and satiety, are as unfavourable as the extremes of hardship, toil, and want, to the increase and multiplication of our kind. Indeed, the abuse of the bounties of nature, much more surely than any partial privation of them, tends to intercept that precious boon of a second and dearer life in our progeny, which was bestowed in the first great command to man from the All-gracious Giver of all, whose name be blessed, whether

there he gives or takes away. His hand, in every page of his book, has written the lesson of moderation. Our physical well-being, our moral worth, our social happiness, our political tranquillity, all depend on that control of all our appetites and passions, which the ancients designed by the cardinal virtue of temperance.

The only real question to our present purpose, with regard to the higher classes, is, how stands the account of their stock, as it consists in wealth of every description? Have the burthens of the war compelled them to curtail any part of their former expenditure; which I have before observed, affords the only standard of estimating property as an object of taxation? Do they enjoy all the same conveniencies, the same comforts, the same elegancies, the luxuries, in the same, or in as many different modes as they did before the war?

In the last eleven years, there have been no less than three solemn inquiries into the finances of the kingdom, by three different committees of your house. The first was in the year 1786. On that occasion, I remember, the report of the committee was examined, and sifted and bolted to the bran, by a gentleman whose keen and powerful talents I have ever admired. He thought there was not sufficient evidence to warrant the pleasing representation, which the committee had made, of our national prosperity. He did not believe that our publick

publick revenue could continue to be so productive, as they had assumed. He even went the length of recording his own inferences of doubt, in a set of resolutions, which now stand upon your journals. And perhaps the retrospect, on which the report proceeded, did not go far enough back, to allow any sure and satisfactory average for a ground of solid calculation. But what was the event? When the next committee sate in 1791, they found, that, on an average of the last four years, their predecessors had fallen short in their estimate of the permanent taxes, by more than three hundred and forty thousand pounds a year. Surely then if I can show, that in the produce of those same taxes, and more particularly of such as affect articles of luxurious use and consumption, the four years of the war have equalled those four years of peace, flourishing, as they were, beyond the most sanguine speculations, I may expect to bear no more of the distress occasioned by the war.

The additional burdens which have been laid on some of those same articles, might reasonably claim some allowance to be made. Every new advance of the price to the consumer, is a new incentive to him to retrench the quantity of his consumption; and if, upon the whole, he pays the same, his property computed by the standard of what he voluntarily pays, must remain the same. But I am willing

ling to forego that fair advantage in the inquiry. I am willing that the receipts of the permanent taxes which existed before January 1793, should be compared during the war, and during the period of peace which I have mentioned. I will go further. Complete accounts of the year 1791 were separately laid before your house. I am ready to stand by a comparison of the produce of four years up to the beginning of the year 1792, with that of the war. Of the year immediately previous to hostilities, I have not been able to obtain any perfect documents; but I have seen enough to satisfy me, that although a comparison including that year, might be less favourable, yet it would not essentially injure my argument.

You will always bear in mind, my dear Sir, that I am not considering whether, if the common enemy of the quiet of Europe had not forced us to take up arms in our own defence, the spring-tide of our prosperity might not have flowed higher than the mark at which it now stands. That consideration is connected with the question of the justice and the necessity of the war. It is a question which I have long since discussed. I am now endeavouring to ascertain whether there exists, in fact, any such necessity as we hear every day asserted, to furnish a miserable pretext for counselling us to surrender, at discretion, our conquests, our honour, our

our dignity, our very independence, and, with it, all that is dear to man. It will be more than sufficient for that purpose, if I can make it appear that we have been stationary during the war. What then will be said, if, in reality, it shall be proved that there is every indication of increased and increasing wealth, not only poured into the grand reservoir of the national capital, but diffused through all the channels of all the higher classes, and giving life and activity, as it passes, to the agriculture, the manufactures, the commerce, and the navigation of the country?

The finance committee, which has been appointed in this session, has already made two reports. Every conclusion that I had before drawn, as you know, from my own observation, I have the satisfaction of seeing there confirmed by that great publick authority. Large as was the sum, by which the committee of 1791 found the estimate of 1786 to have been exceeded in the actual produce of four years of peace, their own estimate has been exceeded, during the war, by a sum more than one-third larger. The same taxes have yielded more than half a million beyond their calculation. They yielded this, notwithstanding the stoppage of the distilleries, against which, you may remember, I privately remonstrated. With an allowance fi that defalcation, they have yielded sixty tho pounds annually above the actual ave t

preceding four years of peace. I believe this to have been without parallel in all former wars. If regard be had to the great and unavoidable burthens of the present war, I am confident of the fact.

But let us descend to particulars. The taxes, which go by the general name of assessed taxes, comprehend the whole, or nearly the whole domestick establishment of the rich. They include some things, which belong to the middling, and even to all, but the very lowest, classes. They now consist of the duties on houses and windows, on male servants, horses, and carriages. They did also extend to cottages, to female servants, waggons, and carts used in husbandry, previous to the year 1792; when, with more enlightened policy, at the moment that the possibility of war could not be out of the contemplation of any statesman, the wisdom of parliament confined them to their present objects. I shall give the gross assessment for five years, as I find it in the appendix to the second report of your committee.

1791 ending 5th April	1792	£. 1,706,334
1792	1793	1,585,291
1793	1794	1,597,623
1794	1795	1,608,196
1795	1796	1,625,874

Here will be seen a gradual increase during the whole

whole progress of the war: and if I am correctly informed, the rise in the last year, after every deduction that can be made, affords the most consoling and encouraging prospect. It is enormously out of all proportion.

There are some other taxes, which seem to have a reference to the same general head. The present minister, many years ago, subjected bricks and tiles to a duty under the excise. It is of little consequence to our present consideration, whether these materials have been employed in building more commodious, more elegant, and more magnificent habitations, or in enlarging, decorating, and remodelling those, which sufficed for our plainer ancestors. During the first two years of the war, they paid so largely to the publick revenue, that in 1794 a new duty was laid upon them, which was equal to one half of the old, and which has produced upwards of 165,000*l.* in the last three years. Yet notwithstanding the pressure of this additional weight*, there has been an actual augmentation in

* This and the following tables on the same construction are compiled from the reports of the finance committee in 1791 and 1797, with the addition of the separate paper laid before the house of commons, and ordered to be printed on the 7th of February 1792.

BRICKS

in the consumption. The only two other articles which come under this description, are, the stamp-duty on gold and silver plate, and the customs on glass plates. This latter is now, I believe, the single instance

---

BRICKS AND TILES.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 94,521	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 122,975	
	1788	96,278		1794	106,811	
	1789	91,773		1795	83,804	
	1790	104,409		1796	94,668	
		£. 386,981			£. 408,258	Increase to 1790 £.31,277
	1791	- 115,382	4 Yrs. to 1791		£. 407,842	Increase to 1791 £. 416

PLATE.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 22,707	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 25,920	
	1788	23,295		1794	23,637	
	1789	22,453		1795	25,607	
	1790	18,483		1796	28,513	
		£. 86,888			£. 103,677	Increase to 1790 £. 16,789
	1791	- 31,523	4 Yrs. to 1791		£. 95,754	Increase to 1791 £. 7,923

GLASS PLATES.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. ——	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 5,655	
	1788	5,496		1794	5,456	
	1789	4,686		1795	5,839	
	1790	6,008		1796	8,871	
		£. 16,190			£. 25,821	
	1791	- 7,880	4 Yrs. to 1791		£. 24,070	Increase to 1791 £. 1,721

instance of costly furniture to be found in the catalogue of our imports. If it where wholly to vanish, I should not think we were ruined. Both the duties have risen, during the war, very considerably in proportion to the total of their produce.

We have no tax among us on the most necessary articles of food. The receipts of our Custom-house, under the heads of groceries, afford us, however, some means of calculating our luxuries of the table. The articles of tea, coffee, and cocoa-nuts, I would propose to omit, and to take them in stead from the excise, as best shewing what is consumed at home. Upon this principle, adding them all together (with the exception of sugar, for a reason which I shall afterwards mention) I find that they have produced, in one mode of comparison, upwards of 272,000*l.*, and in the other mode, upwards of 165,000*l.* more during the war than in peace*. An additional duty was also laid

---

* GROCERIES.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 167,389	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 124,655	
	1788	133,191		1794	195,340	
	1789	142,871		1795	208,242	
	1790	156,311		1796	159,826	
		£. 599,762			£. 688,563	Increase to 1790 £. 88,801
	1791	236,727	4 Yrs. to 1791		£. 669,100	Increase to 1791 £. 19,463

TEA

laid in 1795, on tea, another on coffee, and a third on raisins; an article, together with currants, of much more extensive use, than would readily be imagined. The balance in favour of our argument would have been much enhanced, if our coffee and fruit ships from the Mediterranean had arrived, last year, at their usual season. They do not appear in these accounts. This was one consequence arising

---

TEA.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 424,144	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 477,644	
	1788	426,660		1794	467,132	
	1789	539,575		1795	507,518	
	1790	417,636		1796	526,307	
		£. 1,808,115			£. 1,978,601	Increase to 1790 £. 170,486
	1791	448,709	4 Yrs. to 1791		£. 1,832,680	Increase to 1791 £. 145,921

The additional duty imposed in 1795, produced in that year £. 137,656, and in 1796 £. 200,107.

COFFEE AND COCOA NUTS.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£ 17,006	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 36,846	
	1788	30,217		1794	49,177	
	1789	34,784		1795	27,913	
	1790	38,647		1796	19,711	
		£. 120,654			£. 133,647	Increase to 1790 £. 12,993
	1791	41,194	4 Yrs. to 1791		£. 144,842	Decrease to 1791 £. 11,195

The additional duty of 1795 in that year gave £. 16,775, and in 1796 £. 15,319.

arising (would to God, that none more afflicting to Italy, to Europe, and the whole civilized world had arisen!) from our impolitick and precipitate desertion of that important maritime station. As to sugar*, I have excluded it from the groceries, because the account of the customs is not a perfect criterion of the consumption, much having been re-exported to the north of Europe, which used to be supplied by France; and in the official papers which I have followed, there are no materials to furnish grounds for computing this re-exportation. The increase on the face of our entries is immense during the four years of war, little short of thirteen hundred thousand pounds.

The increase of the duties on beer has been regularly progressive, or nearly so, to a very large

---

* SUGAR.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£.1,065,109	Yrs. of War.	1793	£.1,473,139	
	1788	1,184,458		1794	1,392,965	
	1789	1,095,106		1795	1,338,246	
	1790	1,069,108		1796	1,474,899	
						Increase to 1790
		£.4,413,781			£.5,679,249	£.1,265,468
						Increase to 1791
	1791	1,044,053	4 Yrs. to 1791		£.4,392,725	£.1,286,524

There was a new duty on *Sugar* in 1791, which produced in 1794 234,392 *l.* in 1795 206,932 *l.* and in 1796 245,024 *l.* It is not clear from the report of the Committee, whether the additional duty is included in the account given above.

amount*. It is a good deal above a million, and is more than equal to one-eighth of the whole produce. Under this general head, some other liquors are included,—cyder, perry, and mead, as well as vinegar, and verjuice; but these are of very trifling consideration. The excise duties on wine, having sunk a little during the two first years of the war, were

* BEER, &c.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£.1,761,429	Yrs. of War.	1793	£.2,043,902	
	1788	1,705,199		1794	2,082,053	
	1789	1,742,514		1795	1,931,101	
	1790	1,858,043		1796	2,294,377	
						Increase to 1790
		£.7,067,185			£.8,351,433	£.284,248
						Increase to 1791
	1791	- 1,880,478	4 Yrs. to 1791		£.7,186,234	£.1,165,199

WINE.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£.219,934	Yrs. of War.	1793	£.222,887	
	1788	215,578		1794	283,644	
	1789	252,649		1795	317,072	
	1790	308,624		1796	187,818	
						Increase to 1790
		£.996,785			£.1,011,421	£. 14,638.
						Decrease to 1791
	1791	- 336,549	4 Yrs. to 1791		£.1,113,400	£.101,979.

QUANTITY IMPORTED.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	Tons 29,978	Yrs. of War.	1793	Tons 22,788
	1788	25,442		1794	27,868
	1789	27,414		1795	32,033
	1790	29,182		1796	19,979

The additional duty of 1795 produced that year 730,871, and

were rapidly recovering their level again. In 1795, a heavy additional duty was imposed upon them, and a second in the following year; yet being compared with four years of peace to 1790, they actually exhibit a small gain to the revenue. And low as the importation may seem in 1796, when contrasted with any year since the French treaty in 1787, it is still more than 3000 tons above the average importation for three years previous to that period. I have added sweets, from which our factitious wines are made; and I would have added spirits, but that the total alteration of the duties in 1789, and the recent interruption of our distilleries, rendered any comparison impracticable.

---

and in 1796 394,686 *l.* A second additional duty which produced 98,165 *l.* was laid 1796.

SWEETS.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£.11,167	Yrs. of War.	1793	£.11,016	
	1788	7,375		1794	10,612	
	1789	7,202		1795	13,321	
	1790	4,953		1796	15,050	
		£.30,697			£.49,990	Increase to 1790 £.19,302.
	1791	- 13,282	4 Yrs. to 1791		£.32,812	Increase to 1791 £.17,178.

In 1795 an additional duty was laid on this article, which produced that year 5,679 *l.* and in 1796 9,443 *l.* and in 1796 a second to commence on the 20th of June; its produce in that year was 2,325 *l.*

The ancient staple of our island, in which we are clothed, is very imperfectly to be traced on the books of the custom-house: but I know that our woollen manufactures flourish. I recollect to have seen that fact very fully established, last year, from the registers kept in the West-Riding of Yorkshire. This year in the west of England, I received a similar account, on the authority of a respectable clothier, in that quarter, whose testimony can less be questioned, because, in his political opinions, he is adverse, as I understand, to the continuance of the war. The principal articles of female dress, for some time past, have been muslins and callicoes *. These elegant fabricks of our own looms in the east, which serve for the remittance of our own revenues, have lately been imitated at home, with improving success, by the ingenious and enterprising manufacturers of Manchester, Paisley, and Glasgow. At the same time the importa-

---

* MUSLINS AND CALLICOES.

Yrs. of Peace.	1788	£.129,297	Yrs. of War.	1793	£.173,050	
	1789	138,660		1794	104,902	
	1790	126,267		1795	103,856	
	1791	128,364		1796	272,544	
		£.522,588			£.654,353	Increase to 1791 £.131,764.

This table begins with 1788. The net produce of the preceding year is not in the report whence the table is taken.

tion

tion from Bengal has kept pace with the extension of our own dexterity and industry; while the sale of our * printed goods, of both kinds, has been with equal steadiness advanced, by the taste and execution of our designers and artists. Our woollens and cottons, it is true, are not all for the home market. They do not distinctly prove what is my present point, our own wealth by our own expence. I admit it: we export them in great and growing quantities; and they, who croak themselves hoarse about the decay of our trade, may put as much of this account, as they chuse to the creditor side of money received from other countries in payment for British skill and labour. They may settle the items to their own liking, where all goes to demonstrate our riches. I shall be contented here, with whatever they will have the goodness to leave me,

---

* PRINTED GOODS.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£.142,000	Yrs. of War.	1793	£.191,566	
	1788	154,486		1794	190,554	
	1789	153,202		1795	197,416	
	1790	167,156		1796	230,530	
		£.616,844			£.810,066	Increase to 1790 £. 193,222.
	1791	£.191,489	4 Yrs. to 1791		£.666,333	Increase to 1791 £.143,733.

These duties for 1787, are blended with several others. The proportion of printed goods to other articles for four years was found to be one-fourth. The proportion is here taken.

and

and pass to another entry, which is less ambiguous; I mean that of silk*. The manufactory itself is a forced plant. We have been obliged to guard it from foreign competition by very strict prohibitory laws. What we import, is the raw and prepared material, which is worked up in various ways, and worn in various shapes by both sexes. After what we have just seen, you will probably be surprised to learn, that the quantity of silk, imported during the war, has been much greater, than it was previously in peace; and yet we must all remember to our mortification, that several of our silk ships fell a prey to citizen admiral Richery. You will hardly expect me to go through the tape and thread, and all the other small wares of haberdashery and millenery to be gleaned up among our imports. But I shall make one observation, and with great satisfaction, respecting them. They gradually diminish, as our manufactures of the same description spread into their places; while the account of orna-

---

* SILK.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£.159,912	Yrs. of War.	1793	£.209,915	
	1788	123,998		1794	221,306	
	1789	167,730		1795	210,725	
	1790	212,522		1796	221,007	
		£.654,162			£.862,953	Increase to 1790 £.208,793.
						Increase to 1796
	1791	£.379,128	4 Yrs. to 1791		£.773,378	£.89,577.

mental

mental articles which our country does not produce, and we cannot wish it to produce, continues, upon the whole, to rise, in spite of all the caprices of fancy and fashion. Of this kind are the different furs * used for muffs, trimmings and linings, which, as the chief of the kind, I shall particularize. You will find them below.

The diversions of the higher classes form another, and the only remaining head of inquiry into their expences. I mean those diversions which distinguish the country and the town life? which are visible and tangible to the statesman; which have some publick measure and standard. And here when I look to the report of your committee, I for the first time, perceive a failure. It is clearly so. Whichever way I reckon the four years of peace, the old tax on the sports of the field has

---

* FURS.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£.3,463	Yrs. of War.	1793	£ 2,829	
	1788	2,957		1794	3,353	
	1789	1,151		1795	3,266	
	1790	3,328		1796	6,138	
		£.10,899			£.15,586	Increase to 1790 £.4,687.
	1791	£.5,731	4 Yrs. to 1791		£13,167	Increase to 1791 £.2,419.

The skins here selected from the custom-house accounts are, *Black Bear, Ordinary Fox, Martin, Mink, Musquash, Otter, Racoon*, and *Wolf*.

certainly proved deficient since the war. The same money, however, or nearly the same, has been paid to government; though the same number of individuals have not contributed to the payment. An additional tax was laid in 1791, and, during the war, has produced upwards of 61,000*l.*; which is about 4,000*l.* more than the decrease of the old tax, in one scheme of comparison; and about 4,000*l.* less, in the other scheme. I might remark that the amount of the new tax, in the several years of the war, by no means bears the proportion, which it ought, to the old. There seems to be some great irregularity, or other, in the receipt: but I do not think it worth while to examine into the argument. I am willing to suppose, that many, who, in the idleness of peace, made war upon partridges, hares, and pheasants, may now carry more noble arms against the enemies of their country. Our political adversaries may do what they please, with that concession. They are welcome to make the most of it. I am sure of a very handsome set-off in the other branch of expence; the amusements of a town life.

There is much gaiety, and dissipation, and profusion, which must escape and disappoint, all the arithmetick of political œconomy. But the theatres are a prominent feature. They are established through every part of the kingdom, at a cost unknown till our days. There is hardly a provincial capital,

capital, which does not possess, or which does not aspire to possess, a theatre-royal. Most of them engage, for a short time at a vast price, every actor or actress of name in the metropolis; a distinction, which, in the reign of my old friend Garrick, was confined to very few. The dresses, the scenes, the decorations of every kind, I am told, are in a new style of splendour and magnificence; whether to the advantage of our dramatick taste, upon the whole, I very much doubt. It is a shew and a spectacle, not a play that is exhibited. This is undoubtedly in the genuine manner of the Augustan age, but in a manner, which was censured by one of the best poets and criticks of that or any age:

——migravit ab aure voluptas
Omnis ad incertos oculos, et guadia vana:
Quatuor aut pluris aulæa premuntur in horas,
Dum fugiunt equitam turmæ, peditumque catervæ—

I must interrupt the passage, most fervently to deprecate and abominate the sequel,

Mox trahitur manibus regum fortuna retortis.

I hope, that no French fraternization, which the relations of peace and amity with systematised regicide, would assuredly, sooner or later, draw after them, even if it should overturn our happy constitution

tution itself, could so change the hearts of Englishmen, as to make them delight in representations and processions, which have no other merit than that of degrading and insulting the name of royalty. But good taste, manners, morals, religion, all fly, wherever the principles of jacobinism enter: and we have no safety against them but in arms.

The proprietors, whether in this they follow or lead what is called the town, to furnish out these gaudy and pompous entertainments, must collect so much more from the publick. It was but just before the breaking out of hostilities, that they levied for themselves the very tax, which, at the close of the American war, they represented to lord North, as certain ruin to their affairs to demand for the state. The example has since been imitated by the managers of our Italian opera. Once during the war, if not twice (I would not willingly mistate any thing, but I am not very accurate, on these subjects) they have raised the price of their subscription. Yet I have never heard, that any lasting dissatisfaction had been manifested, or that their houses have been unusually and constantly thin. On the contrary, all the three theatres have been repeatedly altered, and refitted, and enlarged, to make them capacious of the crowds, that nightly flock to them; and one of those huge and lofty piles, which lifts its broad shoulders in gigantick pride, almost emulous of the temples of God, has been

been reared from the foundation at a charge of more than fourscore thousand pounds, and yet remains a naked, rough, unsightly heap.

I am afraid, my dear sir, that I have tired you with these dull though important details. But we are upon a subject, which, like some of a higher nature, refuses ornament, and is contented with conveying instruction. I know, too, the obstinacy of unbelief, in those perverted minds, which have no delight, but in contemplating the supposed distress, and predicting the immediate ruin, of their country. These birds of evil presage, at all times, have grated our ears with their melancholy song; and by some strange fatality or other, it has generally happened, that they have poured forth their loudest and deepest lamentations, at the periods of our most abundant prosperity. Very early in my public life, I had occasion to make myself a little acquainted with their natural history. My first political tract in the collection, which a friend has made of my publications, is an answer to a very gloomy picture of the state of the nation, which was thought to have been drawn by a statesman of some eminence in his time. That was no more than the common spleen of disappointed ambition: in the present day, I fear, that too many are actuated by a more malignant and dangerous spirit. They hope, by depressing our minds with a d
of our means and resources, to drive us, trem
and unresisting, into the toils of our enemies,

whom, from the beginning of the revolution in France, they have ever moved in strict concert and co-operation. If with the report of your finance committee in their hands, they can still affect to despond, and can still succeed, as they do, in spreading the contagion of their pretended fears, among well-disposed, though weak men; there is no way of counteracting them, but by fixing them down to particulars. Nor must we forget, that they are unwearied agitators, bold assertors, dexterous sophisters. Proof must be accumulated upon proof, to silence them. With this view I shall now direct our attention to some other striking and unerring indications of our flourishing condition; and they will, in general, be derived from other sources, but equally authentick; from other reports and proceedings of both houses of parliament, all which unite with wonderful force of consent in the same general result. Hitherto we have seen the superfluity of our capital discovering itself only in procuring superfluous accommodation and enjoyment, in our houses, in our furniture, in our establishments, in our eating and drinking, our clothing, and our publick diversions: we shall now see it more beneficially employed in improving our territory itself: we shall see part of our present opulence, with provident care, put out to usury for posterity.

To what ultimate extent, it may be wise or practicable, to push inclosures of common and waste

waste lands, may be a question of doubt, in some points of view: but no person thinks them already carried to excess; and the relative magnitude of the sums, laid out upon them, gives us a standard of estimating the comparative situation of the landed interest. Your house, this session, appointed a committee on waste lands, and they have made a report by their chairman, an honourable baronet, for whom the minister the other day, (with very good intentions, I believe, but with little real profit to the publick) thought fit to erect a board of agriculture. The account, as it stands there, appears sufficiently favourable. The greatest number of inclosing bills, passed in any one year of the last peace, does not equal the smallest annual number in the war; and those of the last year, exceed, by more than one half, the highest year of peace. But what was my surprise, on looking into the late report of the secret committee of the lords, to find a list of these bills during the war, differing in every year, and * larger on the whole, by nearly

* Report of the Lords' Committee of Secrecy, ordered to be printed, 28th April, 1797, Appendix 44.

INCLOSURE BILLS.

Yrs. of Peace.	1789	33	Yrs. of War.	1793	60
	1790	25		1794	73
	1791	40		1795	77
	1792	40		1796	72
		138			283

one

one third! I have checked this account by the statute-book, and find it to be correct. What new brilliancy then does it throw over the prospect, bright as it was before! The number during the last four years, has more than doubled that of the four years immediately preceding; it has surpassed the five years of peace, beyond which the lords committees have not gone; it has even surpassed (I have verified the fact) the whole ten years of peace. I cannot stop here. I cannot advance a single step in this inquiry, without being obliged to cast my eyes back to the period when I first knew the country. These bills, which had begun in the reign of queen Anne, had passed every year in greater or less numbers from the year 1723; yet in all that space of time, they had not reached the amount of any two years during the present war; and though soon after that time they rapidly increased, still at the accession of his present majesty, they were far short of the number passed in the four years of hostilities.

In my first letter I mentioned the state of our inland navigation, neglected as it had been from the reign of king William to the time of my observation. It was not till the present reign, that the duke of Bridgewater's canal first excited a spirit of speculation and adventure in this way. This spirit shewed itself, but necessarily made no great progress, in the American war. When peace was restored,

stored, it began of course to work with more sensible effect; yet in ten years from that event, the bills passed on that subject were not so many as from the year 1793 to the present session of parliament. From what I can trace on the statute-book, I am confident that all the capital expended in these projects during the peace, bore no degree of proportion, (I doubt on very grave consideration whether all that was ever so expended was equal) to the money which has been raised for the same purposes, since the war *. I know, that in the last four years of peace, when they rose regularly, and rapidly, the sums specified in the acts were not near one-third of the subsequent amount. In the last session of parliament, the grand junction company as it is called, having sunk half a million, (of which I feel the good effects at my own door) applied to your house, for permission to subscribe half as much more among themselves. This grand junction is an inosculation of the grand trunk: and in the

* NAVIGATION AND CANAL BILLS.

Yrs. of Peace.	1789	3	Yrs. of War.	1793	28
	1790	8		1794	18
	1791	10		1795	11
	1792	9		1796	12
		30			69
Money raised		£.2,377,200			£.7,415,100

present

present session, the latter company has obtained the authority of parliament, to float two hundred acres of land, for the purpose of forming a reservoir, thirty feet deep, two hundred yards wide at the head, and two miles in length; a lake which may almost vie with that which once fed the now obliterated canal of Languedock.

The present war is, above all others, (of which we have heard or read) a war against landed property. That description of property is in its nature the firm base of every stable government; and has been so considered, by all the wisest writers of the old philosophy, from the time of the Stagyrite, who observes that the agricultural class of all others is the least inclined to sedition. We find it to have been so regarded, in the practical politicks of antiquity, where they are brought more directly home to our understandings and bosoms in the history of Rome, and above all, in the writings of Cicero. The country tribes were always thought more respectable, than those of the city. And if in our own history, there is any one circumstance to which, under God, are to be attributed the steady resistance, the fortunate issue, and sober settlement, of all our struggles for liberty, it is, that while the landed interest, instead of forming a separate body, as in other countries, has, at all times been in close connection and union with the other great interests of the country, it has been spontaneously allowed

to

to lead and direct, and moderate all the rest. I cannot, therefore, but see with singular gratification, that during a war which has been eminently made for the destruction of the landed proprietors, as well as of priests and kings, as much has been done, by publick works, for the permanent benefit of their stake in this country, as in all the rest of the current century, which now touches to its close. Perhaps, after this, it may not be necessary to refer to private observation; but I am satisfied, that in general, the rents of lands have been considerably increased: they are increased very considerably indeed, if I may draw any conclusion from my own little property of that kind. I am not ignorant, however, where our publick burdens are most galling. But all of this class will consider, who they are that are principally menaced; how little the men of their description in other countries, where this revolutionary fury has but touched, have been found equal to their own protection; how tardy, and unprovided, and full of anguish is their flight, chained down as they are by every tie to the soil; how helpless they are, above all other men, in exile, in poverty, in need, in all the varieties of wretchedness; and then let them well weigh, what are the burdens, to which they ought not to submit for their own salvation.

Many of the authorities, which I ha ready adduced, or to which I have referred, convey

a competent notion of some of our principal manufactures. Their general state will be clear from that of our external and internal commerce, through which they circulate, and of which they are at once, the cause and effect. But the communication of the several parts of the kingdom with each other, and with foreign countries, has always been regarded as one of the most certain tests to evince the prosperous or adverse state of our trade in all its branches. Recourse has usually been had to the revenue of the post-office with this view. I shall include the product of the tax which was laid in the last war, and which will make the evidence more conclusive, if it shall afford the same inference:—I allude to the post-horse duty, which shews the personal intercourse within the kingdom, as the post-office shews the intercourse by letters, both within and without. The first of these standards, then, exhibits an increase, according to my former schemes of comparison, from an eleventh to a twentieth part of the* whole duty. The post-

* POST HORSE DUTY.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£.169,410	Yrs. of War.	1793	£.191,488	
	1788	204,659		1794	202,884	
	1789	170,554		1795	196,691	
	1790	181,155		1796	204,061	
						Increase to 1792
		£.725,778			£.795,124	£. 69,346.
						Increase to 1792
	1791	198,634	4 Yrs. to 1791		£.755,002	£. 40,122.

office,

office, gives still less consolation to those who are miserable, in proportion as the country feels no misery. From the commencement of the war, to the month of April, 1796, the gross produce had increased by nearly one sixth of the whole sum, which the state now derives from that fund. I find that the year ending 5th of April, 1793, gave 627,592*l.* and the year ending at the same quarter, 1796, 750,637*l.* after a fair deduction having been made for the alteration (which, you know, on grounds of policy I never approved) in your privilege of franking. I have seen no formal document subsequent to that period, but I have been credibly informed, there is very good ground to believe, that the revenue of the * post-office still continues

* The above account is taken from a paper which was ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 8th December, 1796. From the gross produce of the year ending 5th April, 1796 there has been deducted in that statement the sum of 36,666*l.* in consequence of the regulation on franking, which took place on the 5th May, 1795, and was computed at 40,000*l.* per ann. To shew an equal number of years, both of peace and war, the accounts of two preceding years are given in the following table, from a Report made since Mr. Burke's death by a committee of the House of Commons appointed to consider the claims of Mr. Palmer, the late Comptroller General; and for still greater satisfaction, the number of letters, inwards and outwards, have been added, except for the year 1790-1791. The letter-book for that year is not to be found.

continues to be regularly and largely upon the rise.

What is the true inference to be drawn from the annual number of bankruptcies, has been the occasion of much dispute. On one side, it has been confidently urged as a sure symptom of a decaying trade: on the other side, it has been insisted, that it is a circumstance attendant upon a thriving trade; for that the greater is the whole quantity of trade, the greater of course must be the positive number of failures, while the aggregate success is still in the same proportion. In truth, the increase of the number may arise from either of those causes. But all must agree in one conclusion, that, if the number diminishes, and at the same time, every other sort of evidence tends to shew an augmentation of trade, there can be no better in-

POST OFFICE. Gross Revenue.	Number of Letters.	
	Inwards.	Outwards.
Apr. 1790 - 1791 - - 575,079 - -	- - - - - -	- - - - - -
1791 - 1792 - - 585,432 - -	6,391,149	5,081,344
1792 - 1793 - - 627,592 - -	6,584,867	5,041,137
1793 - 1794 - - 691,268 - -	7,094,777	6,537,234
1794 - 1795 - - 705,319 - -	7, 71,029	7,473,626
1795 - 1796 - - 750,637 - -	7,641,077	8,597,167

From the last mentioned Report it appears that the accounts have not been completely and authentically made up, for the years ending 5th April, 1796 and 1797, but on the Receiver-General's book there is an increase of the latter year over the former, equal to someting more than 5 per cent.

dication.

wine itself, as well as in the quantity imported; more dealers in wine appear to have been licensed; than in any former year, excepting the first year of the war. This fact may raise some doubt, whether the consumption has been lessened so much as, I believe, is commonly imagined. The only other retail-traders, whom I found so entered as to admit of being selected, are tea-dealers, and sellers of gold and silver plate; both of whom seem to have multiplied very much in proportion to their aggregate number*. I have kept apart one set of licensed sellers, because I am aware, that our antagonists

---

* DEALERS IN TEA.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£.10,934	Yrs. of War.	1793	£.13,939	
	1788	11,949		1794	14,315	
	1789	12,501		1795	13,956	
	1790	13,126		1796	14,830	
		£.48,510			£. 57,040	Increase to 1790 £. 8,530.
	1791	- 13,921	4 Yrs. to 1791		£. 51,497	Increase to 1791 £. 5,543.

SELLERS OF PLATE.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 6,593	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 8,178	
	1788	7,953		1794	8,296	
	1789	7,348		1795	8,128	
	1790	7,988		1796	8,835	
		£.29,882			£33,437	Increase to 1790 £. 3,555.
	1791	- 8,327	4 Yrs. to 1791		£.31,616	Increase to 1791 £. 1,821.

may

may be inclined to triumph a little, when I name auctioneers and auctions. They may be disposed to consider it as a sort of trade, which thrives by the distress of others. But if they will look at it a little more attentively, they will find their gloomy comfort vanish. The publick income from these licences, has risen with very great regularity, through a series of years, which all must admit to have been years of prosperity. It is remarkable too, that in the year 1793, which was the great year of bankruptcies, these * duties on auctioneers and auctions, fell below the mark of 1791; and in 1796, which year had one fifth less than the accustomed average of bankruptcies, they mounted at once beyond all former examples. In concluding this general head, will you permit me, my dear Sir, to bring to your notice an humble, but industrious and laborious set of chapmen, against whom the vengeance of your house has sometimes been

---

* AUCTIONS AND AUCTIONEERS.

Yrs. of Peace:	1787	£. 48,964	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 70,004	
	1788	53,998		1794	82,659	
	1789	52,024		1795	86,890	
	1790	53,156		1796	109,594	
		£.208,137			£.349,147	Increase to 1790 £. 141,010.
	1791	£. 70,973	4 Yrs. to 1791		£.230,146	Increase to 1791 £.119,001.

levelled,

through all the members. The port of London has always supplied the main evidence of the state of our commerce. I know, that amidst all the difficulties and embarrassments of the year 1793, from causes unconnected with, and prior to the war, the tonnage of ships in the Thames actually rose. But I shall not go through a detail of official papers on this point. There is evidence which has appeared this very session before your house, infinitely more forcible and impressive to my apprehension, than all the journals and ledgers of all the inspectors general from the days of Davenant. It is such as cannot carry with it any sort of fallacy. It comes, not from one set, but from many opposite sets of witnesses, who all agree in nothing else; witnesses of the gravest and most unexceptionable character, and who confirm what they say, in the surest manner, by their conduct. Two differing bills have been brought in for improving the port of London. I have it from very good intelligence, that when the project was first suggested from necessity, there were no less than eight different plans, supported by eight different bodies of subscribers. The cost of the least was estimated at two hundred thousand pounds, and of the most extensive, at twelve hundred thousand. The two, between which the contest now lies, substantially agree (as all the others must have done) in the motives and reasons of the preamble: but I shall confine

confine myself to that bill which is proposed on the part of the mayor, aldermen, and common council, because I regard them as the best authority, and their language in itself is fuller and more precise. I certainly see them complain of the "great delays, "accidents, damages, losses, and extraordinary ex- "pences, which are almost continually sustained, "to the hindrance and discouragement of com- "merce, and the great injury of the publick reve- "nue." But what are the causes to which they attribute their complaints? The first is, "THAT FROM "THE VERY GREAT AND PROGRESSIVE "INCREASE OF THE NUMBER AND SIZE OF "SHIPS AND OTHER VESSELS TRADING TO THE "PORT OF LONDON; the river Thames is, in ge- "neral, so much crowded, that the navigation of a "considerable part of the river is rendered tedious "and dangerous; and there is much want of room "for the safe and convenient mooring of vessels, "and constant access to them." The second is of the same nature. It is the want of regulations and arrangements, never before found necessary, for expedition and facility. The third is of another kind, but to the same effect; "that the legal quays are too "confined, and there is not sufficient accommoda- "tion for the landing and shipping of cargoes." And the fourth and last is still different; they describe "the avenues to the legal quays," (which little more than a century since, the great fire of

London opened and dilated beyond the measure of our then circumstances) to be now "much too "narrow and incommodious, for the great con- "course of carts and other carriages usually passing "and repassing there." Thus, our trade has grown too big for the ancient limits of art and nature. Our streets, our lanes, our shores, the river itself, which has so long been our pride, are impeded, and obstructed, and choaked up by our riches. They are like our shops, "bursting with opulence." To these misfortunes, to these distresses and grievances alone, we are told it is to be imputed that still more of our capital has not been pushed into the channel of our commerce, to roll back in its reflux still more abundant capital, and fructify the national treasury in its course. Indeed, my dear sir, when I have before my eyes this consentient testimony of the corporation of the city of London, the West India merchants, and all the other merchants who promoted the other plans, struggling and contending which of them shall be permitted to lay out their money in consonance with their testimony; I cannot turn aside to examine what one or two violent petitions, tumultuously voted by real or pretended liverymen of London, may have said of the utter destruction and annihilation of trade.

This opens a subject, on which every true lover of his country, and at this crisis, every friend to the liberties of Europe, and of social order in every country,

country, must dwell and expatiate with delight. I mean to wind up all my proofs of our astonishing and almost incredible prosperity, with the valuable information given to the secret committee of the Lords by the inspector-general. And here I am happy that I can administer an antidote to all despondence, from the same dispensary from which the first dose of poison was supposed to have come. The report of that committee is generally believed to have derived much benefit from the labours of the same noble Lord, who was said, as the author of the pamphlet in 1795, to have led the way in teaching us to place all our hope on that very experiment, which he afterwards declared in his place to have been from the beginning utterly without hope. We have now his authority to say, that as far as our resources were concerned, the experiment was equally without necessity.

"It appears," as the committee has very justly and satisfactorily observed, "by the accounts of "the value of the imports and exports for the last "twenty years, produced by Mr. Irving, that the de- "mand for cash to be sent abroad" (which by the way, including the loan to the emperor, was nearly one third less sent to the continent of Europe than in the seven years war) "was greatly compensated "by a very large balance of commerce in favour of "this kingdom; greater than was ever known in "any preceding period. The value of the exports

"of

"of the last year amounted, according to the va-
"luation on which the accounts of the inspector
"general are founded, to 30,424,184*l.*; which is
"more than double what it was in any year of the
"American war, and one third more than it was
"on an average during the last peace, previous to
"the year 1792; and though the value of the im-
"ports to this country has, during the same peace,
"greatly increased, the excess of the value of the
"exports above that of the imports, which consti-
"tutes the balance of trade, has augmented even
"in a greater proportion." These observations might perhaps be branched out into other points of view, but I shall leave them to your own active and ingenious mind. There is another and still more important light in which the inspector general's information may be seen; and that, as affording a comparison of some circumstances in this war, with the commercial history of all our other wars in the present century.

In all former hostilities, our exports gradually declined in value, and then (with one single exception) ascended again, till they reached and passed the level of the preceding peace. But this was a work of time, sometimes more, sometimes less slow. In queen Anne's war, which began in 1702, it was an interval of ten years, before this was effected. Nine years only were necessary in the war of 1739, for the same operation. The seven years

war

war saw the period much shortened: hostilities began in 1755; and in 1758, the fourth year of the war, the exports mounted above the peace-mark. There was, however, a distinguishing feature of that war, that our tonnage, to the very last moment, was in a state of great depression, while our commerce was chiefly carried on by foreign vessels. The American war was darkened with singular and peculiar adversity. Our exports never came near to their peaceful elevation, and our tonnage continued with very little fluctuation, to subside lower and lower *. On the other hand, the present war, with regard to our commerce, has the white mark of as singular felicity. If from internal causes, as well as the consequence of hostilities, the tide ebbed in 1793, it rushed back again with a bore in the following year; and from that time has continued to swell, and run, every successive year, higher and higher into all our ports. The value of our exports last year above the year 1792 (the mere increase of our commerce during the war) is equal to the average value of all the exports during the wars of William and Anne.

It has been already pointed out, that our imports have not kept pace with our exports; of course,

* This account is extracted from different parts of Mr. Chalmers' estimate. It is but just to mention, that in Mr. Chalmers' estimate, the sums are uniformly lower than those of the same year in Mr. Irving's account.

on

on the face of the account, the balance of trade, both positively and comparatively considered, must have been much more than ever in our favour. In that early little tract of mine, to which I have already more than once referred, I made many observations on the usual method of computing that balance, as well as the usual objection to it, that the entries at the custom-house were not always true. As you probably remember them, I shall not repeat them here. On the one hand, I am not surprised that the same trite objection is perpetually renewed by the detractors of our national affluence; and on the other hand I am gratified in perceiving that the balance of trade seems to be now computed in a manner much clearer, than it used to be, from those errours which I formerly noticed. The inspector-general appears to have made his estimate with every possible guard and caution. His opinion is entitled to the greatest respect. It was in substance, (I shall again use the words of the Report, as much better than my own) "That the "true balance of our trade, amounted, on a me-"dium of the four years preceding January 1796, "to upwards of 6,500,000*l.* per annum, exclusive "of the profits arising from our East and West "India trade, which he estimates at upwards of "4,000,000*l.* per annum; exclusive of the profits "derived from our fisheries." So that including the fisheries, and making a moderate allowance for the

the exceedings, which Mr. Irving himself supposes, beyond his calculation, without reckoning, what the publick creditors themselves pay to themselves, and without taking one shilling from the stock of the landed interest; our colonies, our oriental possessions, our skill and industry, our commerce, and navigation, at the commencement of this year, were pouring a new annual capital into the kingdom; hardly half a million short of the whole interest of that tremendous debt, from which we are taught to shrink in dismay, as from an overwhelming and intolerable oppression.

If then the real state of this nation is such as I have described, and I am only apprehensive, that you may think, I have taken too much pains to exclude all doubt on this question; if no class is lessened in its numbers, or in its stock, or in its conveniencies, or even its luxuries; if they build as many habitations, and as elegant and as commodious as ever, and furnish them with every chargeable decoration, and every prodigality of ingenious invention, that can be thought of by those who even encumber their necessities with superfluous accommodation; if they are as numerously attended; if their equipages are as splendid; if they regale at table with as much or more variety of plenty than ever; if they are clad in as expensive and changeful a diversity according to their tastes and modes; if they are not deterred from the pleasures of the

field by the charges, which government has wisely turned from the culture to the sports of the field; if the theatres are as rich and as well filled and greater, and at a higher price than ever; (and, what is more important than all) if it is plain from the treasures which are spread over the soil, or confided to the winds and the seas, that there are as many who are indulgent to their propensities of parsimony, as others to their voluptuous desires, and that the pecuniary capital grows instead of diminishing; on what ground are we authorised to say, that a nation, gamboling in an ocean of superfluity, is undone by want? With what face can we pretend, that they who have not denied any one gratification to any one appetite, have a right to plead poverty in order to famish their virtues, and to put their duties on short allowance? That they are to take the law from an imperious enemy, and can contribute no longer to the honour of their king, to the support of the independence of their country, to the salvation of that Europe, which, if it falls, must crush them with its gigantick ruins? How can they affect to sweat, and stagger, and groan under their burthens, to whom the mines of Newfoundland, richer than those of Mexico and Peru, are now thrown in as a make-weight in the scale of their exorbitant opulence? What excuse can they have to faint, and creep, and cringe, and prostrate themselves at the

footstool

footstool of ambition and crime, who, during a short though violent struggle, which they have never supported with the energy of men, have amassed more to their annual accumulation, than all the well-husbanded capital, that enabled their ancestors, by long, and doubtful, and obstinate conflicts, to defend, and liberate, and vindicate the civilised world? But I do not accuse the people of England. As to the great majority of the nation, they have done whatever in their several ranks, and conditions, and descriptions, was required of them by their relative situations in society; and from those the great mass of mankind cannot depart, without the subversion of all publick order. They look up to that government, which they obey that they may be protected. They ask to be led and directed by those rulers, whom providence and the laws of their country have set over them, and under their guidance to walk in the ways of safety and honour. They have again delegated the greatest trust, which they have to bestow, to those faithful representatives who made their true voice heard against the disturbers and destroyers of Europe. They suffered, with unapproving acquiescence, solicitations, which they had in no shape desired, to an unjust and usurping power, whom they had never provoked, and whose hostile menaces they did not dread. When the exigencies of the publick service could only be met by their voluntary zeal

they started forth with an ardour, which outstripped the wishes of those, who had injured them by doubting, whether it might not be necessary to have recourse to compulsion. They have, in all things reposed an enduring, but not an unreflecting confidence. That confidence demands a full return; and fixes a responsibility on the ministers entire and undivided. The people stands acquitted if the war is not carried on in a manner suited to its objects. If the publick honour is tarnished; if the publick safety suffers any detriment; the ministers, not the people, are to answer it, and they alone. Its armies, its navies, are given to them without stint or restriction. Its treasures are poured out at their feet. Its constancy is ready to second all their efforts. They are not to fear a responsibility for acts of manly adventure. The responsibility which they are to dread, is, lest they should shew themselves unequal to the expectation of a brave people. The more doubtful may be the constitutional and œconomical questions, upon which they have received so marked a support, the more loudly they are called upon to support this great war, for the success of which their country is willing to supersede considerations of no-slight importance. Where I speak of responsibility, I do not mean to exclude that species of it, which the legal powers of the country have a right finally to exact from those who abuse a publick trust; but high as this is, there

there is a responsibility which attaches on them, from which the whole legitimate power of this kingdom cannot absolve them; there is a responsibility to conscience and to glory; a responsibility to the existing world, and to that posterity, which men of their eminence cannot avoid for glory or for shame; a responsibility to a tribunal, at which, not only ministers, but kings and parliaments, but even nations themselves, must one day answer.

FINIS.

R. & R. Gilbert, Printers, St. John's Square, London.

BOOKS

PRINTED FOR, AND SOLD BY

F. C. AND J. RIVINGTON,

NO. 62, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

---

1. THE Ninth and Tenth Volumes of the WORKS of the late Right Honourable EDMUND BURKE, containing various miscellaneous Pieces. Among these are, a fourth Letter on Regicide Peace; A Letter to the Empress of Russia; Several Letters on the Affairs of Ireland; A Letter to the Hon. C. J. Fox, written in the Year 1777; Several Papers relative to the American War; Letters and Thoughts on the Executions of the Rioters in 1780; Letter to the Right Hon. Henry Dundas, with a Negro Code. Tracts and Letters relative to the Laws against Popery in Ireland; Letters and Speeches in Parliament relating to the Test Laws, Parliamentary Reform, Libel, Marriage, and Nullum Tempus Acts; Hints for an Essay on the Drama; An Abridgment of English History, from the Roman Invasion to the End of the Reign of King John. Price in Boards 1l. 4s.

2. The Eleventh and Twelfth Volumes of Mr. BURKE'S WORKS, containing the Ninth and Eleventh Reports of the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company in 1783; exhibiting a full and comprehensive View of the Commerce, Revenue, Civil Establishment, and general Policy of the Company; and also various Papers relative to the Impeachment of Mr. HASTINGS. Price in Boards 1l. 4s.

3. The Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Volumes in quarto, of Mr. BURKE'S WORKS, intended to complete that Edition.

C.H